

BEING COSMOPOLITAN

The consumption practices and behaviors of consumers betwixt and between marketplaces

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Abstract

Contemporary global nomadism is an emerging phenomenon enabled by the far-reaching forces of globalization, whereby people voluntarily chose to embrace lifestyles of continuous mobility between different countries and cultures. This research examines how do nomadic cosmopolitan consumers navigate through diverse constellations of sociocultural environments, marketplace offerings, possessions, experiences and brands while transitioning from one location to another.

Following the theoretical paradigms of practice theory, this study advances the notion that cosmopolitan nomadism is a complex social practice – consisting of material artifacts, skills, routines, teleoaffective structures, and cultural understandings – which attracts and “recruits” individuals, and which becomes a foundational building block of their social life. Based on insight from a series of phenomenological interviews with nomadic cosmopolitans, it is suggested that consumption emerges through and for the sake of migrants’ participation as practitioners in the nomadic cosmopolitan practice. Within this operational context, meanings, doings and material artifacts are orchestrated through three primary dispersed practices of anchoring, immersion and divestment. Consumption varies within each of those practices as they influence the kinds of brands, products and possessions consumers orient themselves towards, or detach from, throughout the temporal phases that segment the length of time one spends in a certain location – namely, phases of arrival, settling in and departure.

The perspective offered by this study illuminates a new theoretical angle through which we can begin to better understand the trajectory of possessions, brands, experiences and beliefs in conditions of continuous transnational mobility. It shows that nomadic cosmopolitanism is dynamic and individually differentiated – hence, it is the fact of one’s unique way of engagement in the practice that explains individuated processes of consumption. This research suggests that perceptions of value and utility, as well as symbolic meaning of objects and activities, pivot around complex cognitive structures and subject positions, and evolve continuously as one changes as a practitioner, not only in the grander scheme of his/her life, but also within the temporal frame of a single residency.

Keywords social practices, practice theory, mobility, cosmopolitans, global nomadism, acculturation, globalization, migrants, nomads, modernity

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research phenomenon

The fall of the 9-to-5 and the rise of the 4-hour work week; the opt out of a life-long mortgage coupled with a permanent work contract in lieu of the freedom to check in to the London office from a co-working and co-living space in New York. These are not only catchy talking points in the contemporary life-work-balance discourse but surface markers of a phenomenon that is gaining a steady momentum: the emergence of a new social type – a modern-day nomad – adapted and evolved to live comfortably in the “liquid modernity”¹ (Bauman, 2000) of our present time. Enabled by growing access- and sharing- economies, cheap airfare, digitalization of professional and social life, as well as archetypal interest in exploring the unknown, people of diverse demographic and psychographic backgrounds gravitate towards a location independent lifestyle. Entrepreneurs, journalists, artists, consultants, strategists, academics, designers and developers among others, effortlessly and actively choose to unroot from their native locale and to work and live in different countries for extended periods of time, sometimes setting base in several countries at once. What started as a niche trend most prototypical for elite business professionals, bohemians or young individuals indulging in explorative travel before “real life begins”, is now the new normal embedded in the worldviews of many from the Y and Z generations². In this research, I focus on the consumption aspects of this new cultural and behavioral phenomenon of cosmopolitan neo-nomadism.

Contemporary nomadism should be of interest to academics and practitioners alike, because location independent consumers continuously challenge and re-shape familiar consumption practices, and thus they carve novel need gaps in the market.

¹ Bauman’s theories of liquid modernity see the structures of the modern world not as heavy and solid, but light and liquid and in which speed of movement of people, money, images and information is essential (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

² Generation Y denotes individuals born between 1977 and 1994, whereas Generation Z refers to those born thereafter until present day (see Nayyar, 2001)

The gaining prominence of the neo-nomadic culture has been reflected in a reactive market that has been aiming to cater to and accommodate the highly mobile lifestyle pertinent to the phenomenon. Airbnb, Roam, Netflix, networks of co-living spaces, social communication platforms, digital books, music, and entertainment, are not only facilitating the settlement of modern day nomadism as a contemporary form of living, but are emerging as a result of it. A better understanding of consumers' dispositions, behaviors and practices in the context of nomadic mobility is thus timely and needed. This study contributes to a still limited body of literature on the principles of consumption in mobility and sheds light on how do urban nomads consume while crossing the globe, alternating between cultures, and searching for personal and professional fulfillment.

1.2 Research objective & context

The purpose of this research is to provide an account of how do consumers enact and approach daily consumption in conditions of transnational mobility and modern nomadic living. Specifically, I focus on uncovering what are the core consumption practices which contemporary nomadic consumers construct and perform as they move about the world and transition in and between different cultural and national environments. The research questions that motivate my inquiry are how do modern day nomads orient themselves in new environments and unfamiliar marketplaces; what knowledge, understandings or desired outcomes guide their consumption choices as they settle in a new country of residence; what goals motivate their purchasing decisions when gravitating towards particular brands and/or objects; what practices and contexts enable them to discriminate between “liquid possessions”³ (Bardhi, Eckhardt & Arnould, 2012) to be left behind and objects with importance to be carried with to the next location. Taken together, I seek to discover what are the embodied, interwo-

³ In Bardhi et al. (2012) possessions with which consumers form detached and flexible relationships are theorized as “liquid”.

ven practices within which consumption in conditions of transcultural and transnational mobility unfolds.

For the research context of this study, I chose individuals who are known in the contemporary social vocabulary as “global nomads” or “global cosmopolitans”. While a detailed discussion of the terminology employed in this study is presented in the next chapter, at this outset here, it is worth mentioning that I operationalize the term as inclusive of a wider spectrum of “global cosmopolitan” consumers – not just those who embody the elitist affluence or professional exceptionalism usually associated with the expression (see Bardhi et al., 2012; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). The global nomads of interest to this research are neither corporate professionals merely moving from one assignment to another, nor political or economic migrants transitioning from their home to a host country. They are the neo-nomads of the present day, pursuing education, love, freedom, and flexibility in a global world where they work remotely and digitally, or change industries and places of employment on a quest for dynamic career advancement and enrichment. They are people of different financial means who, by the virtue of a connected and global world, have been presented with opportunities for flexible, transnational lifestyle which they have embraced, or who have actively pursued such lifestyle and have purposefully created such opportunities. By defining the scope of the research context for this study as such, I aimed to map out the underpinnings of the phenomenon and the boundaries of the diverse consumption practices that different global nomads enact, without constraining the field of inquiry to selected “jet set” (Philips & Smith, 2008) representatives of an otherwise diverse cohort within which the phenomenon unfolds. As a result, this research sheds light on the consumption practices of demographically diverse cosmopolitan nomads, who embody a robust representation of the broader currents within a globalized modernity.

1.3 Research motivation & theoretical orientation

This study is topically situated within a growing and multifaceted discussion about the effects of modernity and globalization on consumers, their behaviors and the marketplace. A fluid, mobile, and decentralized global world is no longer a vision of the future, or an analytical abstraction based on theoretical foresight. We live in its current, continuously unfolding, manifestation that reaches far and transforms our commercial, intellectual and cultural settings. Accordingly, this study contributes to a conversation that is relevant and worthy of attention.

One of the widely accepted consequences of globalization is the development of individual outlooks, behaviors and feelings that transcend local and national boundaries (Woodward, Skrbis, & Bean, 2008). A consequence of and a cause for this development, mobility is an interwoven thread in the makeup of a globalized world. It both challenges and reconstructs consumer's dynamics with space, time, objects, people, and the marketplace. Yet, our understanding and knowledge of the effects of mobility and deterritorialization⁴ on consumers and their behaviors are still very limited. Studies which have come perhaps closest to explaining the effects of migration on consumer behavior have focused on one-directional migration and migrant's adaptation and acculturation from a home to a host culture. Thus, the dynamics and contextual issues that are unique to a neo-nomadic consumer culture, as well as the consumption practices and behaviors of temporary cosmopolitan migrants, have been left out of bounds and unexplained. Only a few studies have examined the consumption behaviors and motivations of highly mobile consumers, identified as "global cosmopolitans". Those studies have provided us with the understanding that consumers in mobility manage spatial and temporal frameworks, as well as identity projects, differently than sedentary consumers, and that they display a unique disposition towards objects and home (Bardhi et al., 2012; Figueiredo, 2012; Figueiredo & Uncles, 2015; Nowicka,

⁴ The term deterritorialization here is used as defined by Craig & Douglass (2006) to denote the detachment between culture and geographic location which results in values, attitudes and/or behavior becoming more amorphous and continually changing, particularly with regard to other cultures and cultural values.

2007; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). For instance, we know that a notion of “flexible consumption” emerges when observing mobile consumers’ behaviors (Figueiredo & Uncles, 2015, p. 50). In particular, unrooted consumers not only tend to develop unique temporal skills and abilities to plan the future use of possessions (Figueiredo & Uncles, 2015), but they systematically form “liquid” attachments to objects and gravitate towards virtual and immaterial consumption practices (Bardhi et al., 2012). They anchor their identities not in a locale, but in their cosmopolitan mobile and professional lifestyles (Bardhi et al., 2012). Respectively, the conception of “home” emerges as a set of relationships to humans, places and objects, both present and excluded (Nowicka, 2007). Extant research has, therefore, began to paint a picture of the complexity defining mobile consumers’ behaviors, however our understanding of what are the constituent contextual, material and affective elements that shape nomads’ consumption in mobility is scant. Incomplete is also our knowledge of the systematic ways mobile consumers navigate within and consume across different cultural and economic commercial contexts.

This research is therefore motivated by the need for explanatory contribution to our grasp of what consumption practices do individuals engage in, as they traverse the globe and transition from one cultural and commercial context to another. By accounting for the limitations and boundaries of acculturation theory⁵ (thus far a traditional choice when explaining the behaviors of consumers in mobility), I turn to social practice theories instead, which are yet to be fully employed as analytical tool in the context of cosmopolitan mobility. Regarding consumption, the promise of theories of practice is that they challenge dominant accounts by exposing and analyzing phenomena neglected by cultural theories and by providing an alternative to explanations based on the intentions, attitudes and choices of individuals (Southerton, Olsen, Warde & Cheng, 2012). Through the lens of this theoretical approach, I therefore shift the unit of analysis from the individual motivations for decision-making to the “doings” (Shove & Warde, 2002) of consumers and the consumption practices that they enact in their nomadic lives. This approach illuminates how consumption happens

⁵ See Bardhi et al. (2012) for commentary.

and how it differs from that of sedentary consumers (Figueiredo, 2015). Hence, with this study, I provide a systematic account of the patterns and practices that frame the lived consumption experiences of nomadic consumers and I contextualize this account with an analysis of the meanings of the various emotions, beliefs and understandings embedded in these practices. As a result, this paper offers a novel point of entry to the conversation about consumption in a globalized world and contributes to the field by expanding our understanding of the effects of global nomadism on consumer behavior and dispositions.

1.4 Summary of main arguments & contributions

I conceptualize nomadic cosmopolitanism as a social practice, a template for doing, understanding, thinking and saying, which presides over the social life of mobile consumers. Following the theoretical paradigms of practice theory, I understand practice as a “set of considerations that governs how people act, [...] [ruling] action not by specifying particular actions to perform, but by offering matters to be taken account of when acting and choosing” (Schatzki, 1996, p. 96). I posit that the social practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism is the operational context in which individuals understand things and activities, and carry routinized performances and acts of consumption. As a practice, nomadic cosmopolitanism is guided by the aspirations of the individual to achieve goals and acceptable ends in and by performing practices (Schatzki, 2002). I suggest that these ends and goals converge within a deeply internalized nomadic cosmopolitan worldview – a collective of beliefs, emotions and aspirations that are specific and unique for the nomadic cosmopolitan. This worldview is a dominant “teleoaffective meaning structure” (Schatzki, 1996) which governs and connects the various constellations of actions that consumers perform and objects that they encounter within a multitude of daily practices. In this process, dispersed doings and sayings are enacted as part of individual’s daily rhythm of life, but collectively integrate and weave into the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism – a complex and mul-

tifaceted blueprint which facilitates and shapes the cultural and behavioral context of the neo-nomadic lifestyle.

This study illustrates how nomadic cosmopolitanism can be interpreted as a coordinated entity comprised of interactions between different activities, performances, thoughts and beliefs, objects, brands and retailers, which mobile consumers undertake, perform, encounter, and consume in the course of their life in mobility. I suggest that each place of residence, where the cosmopolitan nomad settles in for a period of time, constitutes a nodal spacio-temporal network consisting of material, social, and cultural structures and artifacts, as well doings, meanings and sayings. I illustrate that within each such network, nomads employ different, sequentially unfolding, practices through which they manage and make sense of the various commercial and cultural offerings of the locale. These practices take place and are clustered in specific temporal phases throughout one's residence – phases of discovery and settling in, immersion and departure. While nomads engage in many activities pertinent to their mobility during those phases, I show that those temporal segments are marked by distinct consumption practices – where consumption takes center stage and is a constitutive element – which facilitate the challenging processes of managing a commercial and cultural context in flux. I point to three such distinct emergent practices: anchoring, immersion and divestment practices. I suggest that each of those practices requires specific material components and calls for specific activities through which the practices are enacted. Thus, different objects of consumption and performances are organized in unique ways within each of those dispersed practices, whereas different meanings emerge and mold across each temporal segment. With this study, I show that it is those consumption practices that are the foundational means through which consumers navigate complex constellations of marketplace offerings and orchestrate different meanings. They influence the kind of brands, products and possessions that consumers orient themselves towards, or detach from, during the different temporal phases of their immersion in, and transition from, a certain place.

In the following chapters, I begin with a summary of the research background and a brief review of extant research of relevance. I then continue with presenting practice theory and some of its primary tenets of importance to this research endeavor. After defining the research context, I present the methodology and method of this inquiry and I follow up with a presentation of the main findings. This thesis then wraps up with a discussion of its contributions and limitations.

2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

2.1 Globalization & mobility

Coming to wide popularity around 1990, “globalization” is a term generally referring to processes leading to the increased density, speed, and reach of transnational connections, associated with the global spread of capitalism, as well as new information technologies (Eriksen, 2011). While the world has been connected long before the emergence of the term, the word has become to embody a novelty indeed not seen before. Namely, a prominent economic and cultural shift that was a direct consequence of the Internet's exponential growth and the acceleration of technological and communication advances. Those resulted in the subsequent emergence of the so-called “new economy” and multitude of opportunities offered to consumers world wide. An empirical reality, an umbrella term and an analytical paradigm at once in the literature, globalization here is used as referent to the translocation connections shaping social life, which has become disembedded from the determinations of proximate spatio-temporal contexts (D’Andrea, 2006, p. 100).

Mobility is an inherent quality of globalization and central to understanding consumers in conditions of late modernity (Nowicka, 2006). It both facilitates and embodies processes of intercultural exchange and connectivity, but also of fragmentation and deterritorialization. Deterritorialization is a fundamental characteristic of no-

madic behaviors, and a primary point of tension in mobility of much concern to consumer studies. It involves the tearing apart of previously stable social structures, relationships, settings, and cultural representations, and the disembedding of humans and cultural symbols from their place of origin or belonging (Kale, 2005, p. 66). In a pessimistic postmodern perspective, mobility and deterritorialization have been considered a danger to personal well-being and mobile people have been seen as uprooted, in loss of their stable point of perspective; even more-so, nomadization of life and mobility have been perceived as a danger to western sedentary societies (Nowicka, 2007; see also Bauman, 1996; Deleuze, 1977). A contradictory view, however, sees postmodern nomadism as a romantic ideal of total freedom (Nowicka, 2007). Backgrounding these perspectives allows us to note the contextual turbulence from which modern urban nomadism has emerged, and to be attentive to the largely emancipatory outlook and aspiration towards distancing from the status quo which drive much of the momentum behind contemporary cosmopolitan mobility. On a quest to capture those currents, literature thus far has been generally focusing on the re-assessment of existing assumptions about mobile consumers' personal attachment, belonging, identity and orientation towards objects, home, space and time. Some of those studies are reviewed next.

2.2 Consumption & mobility

Overall, there is agreement in the literature that mobility unsettles the lives of consumers and disembeds consumer activities from the bundle in which they are normally conceived (Figueiredo, 2012). Often, mobility and territorial fixity are opposed to one another and this dualism is presented as a tension (Nowicka, 2007) that can have either positive or negative valence – for instance, for modern nomads the uprooting from a locale is a desired purposive action, whereas for political emigrants it is an unwanted inevitability. Whichever the case, to manage these tensions, deterritorialized consumers are known to enact contextually nuanced strategies in their consumption and leisure practices (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Specifically, mobility and

deterritorialization produce processes of reterritorialization and attachment of various kinds (Sheller & Urry, 2006), where efforts to anchor, recontextualize, preserve or create one's sense of identity, place and belonging are undertaken and facilitated through consumption (Kale, 2005). Studies have shown that these processes vary in structure and motivation depending on migrants' trajectory of mobility – unidirectional from one permanent home to another, or multidirectional and cross-global. For instance, research that has examined the relationship between unidirectional mobility (immigration) and socio-cultural adaptation, has shown that reterritorialization processes entail purposefully purchasing and using objects from both the host and home country so that functional and symbolic connections between the new cultural context and the “old” self can be established (Peñaloza, 1994; Oswald, 1999). In contrast, Figueiredo (2012) has shown that for serial expats objects are instead used to mark where are the most stable and social points in the individuals' life. For modern nomads, those nodal points are not necessarily situated in their home or host country, nor are necessarily spatially situated at all. Rather, processes of reterritorialization require that individuals actively re-work constructs of past and future and transform territorially-based identities into global cosmopolitan ones (Figueiredo, 2012).

As evidenced, our understanding of consumption in mobility is thus based on insights from two streams of research, each focusing on two general categories of migrant consumers. The first stream has studied international mobility and consumption by focusing on immigrants who relocate from a home to a host country (Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard, 2005; Lindridge, Hogg, & Shah, 2004; Mehta & Belk, 1991; Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1994; see also Luedicke, 2011). The second, has taken interest in temporary migrants, referred to in various terms such as serial expats (Figueiredo, 2015), global elites (Bardhi et al., 2012), cosmopolitans (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999), or expressive expatriates and neo-nomads (D'Andrea, 2006).

The majority of consumer research concerned with mobility has been concentrated on the first category of immigrant consumers, who uproot from one place and re-root in another. Typically these studies have relied on acculturation theory's overarching per-

spective, however the analytical scope of this theoretical approach has been shown limited by some of its underlying assumptions. Namely, acculturation theory sees consumption as driven by identity projects that are grounded in static and stable notions of nationality and homeland, and regards possessions as symbolic anchors to a home country of origin (Bardhi et al., 2012, p. 525). As a result, the most contemporaneous features of global mobility – features such as global interconnections, formation of networks, flux of information and materiality, and establishment of a new imaginary (Figueiredo, 2012) – are lost in acculturation theory's fixed gaze at its understanding that migrants long for stability and territorial permanence. Consequentially, these studies have limited explanatory power in the context of modern nomadic mobility and territorial transiency.

The second cohort of migrants – those who engage in short-term serial migration – have been of interest to a much more scarcely populated body of research. Those studies have focused on experiential tensions and identity negotiation for temporary migrants (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999), sense of belonging to national culture (Figueiredo & Cayla, 2012), practices of temporal management and structuration of consumption (Figueiredo & Uncles, 2015), and global cosmopolitans' relationships to possessions (Bardhi et al., 2012). Those studies show that for global nomads, mobility is facilitated by preference towards immaterial consumption and skillful management of temporal frameworks, as well as coordinating efforts in managing dispersed social networks and notions of home. We thus know that nomadic consumers enact re-assembling, coordinating and stabilizing practices that anchor and steady their notions of home, time and cultural identity, but we know very little about how their consumption practices, beyond those “coordinating structures” (Figueiredo, 2012), are arranged and carried out, nor what do these practices mean for those consumers. Further, we are lacking a comprehensive understanding of what practices and “doings” do nomadic consumers employ when entering, settling in and exiting an unfamiliar marketscape – when they are truly in transition. Nor do we know what connects the diverse activities and performances enacted by individuals into a comprehensive typology of consumption in conditions of mobility. Utilizing the theoretical framework of

practice theory and its focus on the performances and routinized behaviors that constitute social life, this study addresses these gaps.

2.3 Practice theory

2.3.1 Practice theory & consumer research

Already back in 2005, Allan Warde emphasized the lack of theoretical consolidation in the vast body of extant research on consumption. He encouraged a departure from disciplinary approaches that give only partial understanding of consumption through studying “models of highly autonomous individuals preoccupied with symbolic communication” (2005, p. 132). Warde’s call urged researchers to adopt theoretical perspectives that are capable of avoiding “methodological individualist accounts of the ‘consumer’” and instead could be concerned “as much with what people do and feel as what they mean” (Warde, 2005, p. 130). The solution in sight, according to the author, was in the heterogeneous and fragmented body of theories of practice which, if employed in the studies of consumption, could provide new and fresh insights into how consumption is organized and how it might best be analyzed.

A practice-theoretical approach pivots around how everyday activities are enacted through and guided by routine practices, principles and knowledge, rather than by intentional actions or explicit motivations (Schatzki, 1996). As a result, theories of practice are particularly suited to the postmodern condition as they are neither individualist, nor holist – they are instead presenting flexible pictures of the constitution of social life that accommodate complexities, differences and particularities, and are therefore consistent with many of the claims of critical contemporary social theories (Schatzki, 1996, p. 12; Warde, 2005, p. 132).

Theories of practice emerged in the 1970's from the works of Bourdieu, Giddens, Foucault, Wittgenstein, Charles Taylor, and Judith Butler, among others, and were further advanced at the tip of the new millennium by Schatzki (1996, 2002), as well as Reckwitz (2002), and Warde (2005). In the context of consumption, practice theories have most notably offered their point of view to studies of brand communities (Schau, Muñiz, & Arnould, 2009), taste regimes (Arsel & Bean, 2013), digital music consumption (Magaudda, 2011), the emergence of Nordic walking (Shove & Pantzar, 2005), and family consumption (Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014).

In the research field of consumption and mobility, a handful of studies have only touched upon the role of practices, as in routinized behaviors and embodied activities, in guiding and structuring consumption choices and experiences for migrant and mobile consumers. Bardhi et al. (2012) and Nowicka (2007) report about location independent consumers constructing a practice-based notion of home that is embedded in localized, routine set of everyday consumption practices, and in repetition of habitual social interactions. Figueiredo and Uncles (2015) identify several routinized core practices, such as zoning, distorting timelines, and creating cycles of mobility, that highly mobile consumers use to manage multiple temporal frameworks. These studies validate the notion already advanced by acculturation research that under conditions of extensive mobility, the practices of mobile individuals are geographically dissolute, constantly interrupted and at large different from those of sedentary consumers (Nowicka, 2007). Gaining a more nuanced understanding, however, about how consumers organize, conduct and enact everyday consumption practices in transient commercial environments, requires shifting the focus from the motivation for consumption to the consumption itself. Practice theories facilitate this shift comfortably – they encourage placing the individual as a level of analysis to the background, and instead taking interest in consumption as it is embedded in the practices of the consumer. This allows us to better understand both the organization and essence of the consumption practices themselves *and* the consumer – as a practitioner embedded in a nexus of practice elements. Consequentially, studying consumption in the conditions

of mobility through a practice-theoretical approach materializes as a particularly valuable endeavor.

2.3.2 Primary tenets of practice theory

Practices are the contexts in which routinized actions are carried, objects are desired, purchased, used and discarded, things and actions are understood, and in which different actions and activities interconnect (Schatzki, 2001; Reckwitz, 2002). An organized constellation of actions, a practice can be seen as a coordinated entity only when it is recognizable across time and space (Røpke, 2009; Shove et al., 2007, p. 71). To be recognizable as such an entity, the activities involved in a practice need be performed not only by single individuals, but by groups of people; ergo, the existence of a practice requires its enactment, and this enactment always differs slightly and may transform the entity over time (Røpke, 2009). Individuals face practices as coordinated recognizable entities which are relatively enduring, however through their own performances of the practices, they reproduce and transform those entities over time (Røpke, 2009). To reflect this dynamic, practice theories offer two central notions of practice: practice as a coordinated entity and practice as performance (Schatzki, 1996).

Practice as a coordinated entity consists of temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed doings and sayings that are linked in certain ways and thus form a “nexus” (Schatzki, 1996). Those doings and sayings can be interconnected through understanding (knowing how to do something, or what to say), explicit rules, instructions and principles (formulations of what or how something is to be done), and through “teleoaffective” structures (orderings of ends, projects and tasks, linked and guided emotions and moods) (Schatzki, 1996, p. 89). A practice is therefore a configuration of heterogeneous elements – it forms a “block” whose existence necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, including “things” and their use (Reckwitz, 2002, pp. 249–250). Forming a practice as a coordi-

nated entity is about “gluing” bodily-mental activities that are held together by material, meaning and competence (Røpke, 2009). While different conceptions of these linking components have been employed thus far in the literature⁶, I find most suitable for the goals of this study the essential position that the tripartite structure of practices is constituted in a nexus of objects, doings and meanings (Arsel & Bean, 2013; Hartmann, 2013; Magaudda, 2011; Schatzki 1996; Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

Objects are material or abstract things (ideas, sound, experiences, stories, product, brand, service etc.) to be consumed and handled within practices; thus, objects can be regarded as resources for performing practices and, in turn, consumption can be regarded as a method for achieving the performance of a practice (Hartmann, 2013; Magaudda, 2011). Doings are the routinized performances, embodied competences and skills, and bodily, mental and emotional activities (such as handling things, talking, reading, purchasing, using) that involve mental patterns including know-how, competences, aims and emotions (Hartmann, 2013; Magaudda, 2011; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). Finally, objects and activities gain meaning in light of a practice, hence meanings arise within the context of a practice (Epp & Price, 2010; Hartmann, 2013). Meaning is about making sense of the activities and objects – including the ideas of what these activities and objects are good for (or why they are considered problematic), alongside the emotions, beliefs and understandings related to them (Røpke, 2009). Practices, therefore, instill objects and doings with relevance and produce meaning for their practitioners (Arsel & Bean, 2013; Warde, 2005). These three dimensions of a practice, objects–doings–meanings, intertwine with one another and shape practices as socially shared patterns that embody templates of activities and understandings (Magaudda, 2011).

To exist practices need to be performed. Within those performances, the individual becomes the “carrier” of a practice – carrier of not only patterns of bodily behavior, but also of ways of understanding, knowing how and desiring activity; importantly,

⁶ For instance, Schau, Muniz, and Arnould (2009) work with the concepts of understandings, procedures, and engagements, while Shove et al. (2007) conceptualize materials, meanings, and forms of competence as the constituting elements of a practice.

these activities are elements and qualities of a practice, not qualities of the individual (Reckwitz, 2002, pp. 249-250). Consequentially, practices guide not only behavior, but also desires and emotions. They equip individuals with culturally shared patterns for routinized behavior and ways of thinking as well as of understanding (Hartmann, 2013; Warde, 2005). In this conception, consumption emerges as an aspect of a practice and takes place within and for the sake of the practice, because it is practices, rather than individual desires, that require material artifacts and create wants (Warde, 2005; Røpke, 2009). As a result, consumption occurs as items are appropriated in the course of engaging in particular practices, and therefore consumption is not itself a practice but is an element in the practice, not an element within individuals (Warde, 2005).

2.3.3 Types of practices

There are two primary types of practices embedded at the foothold of practice theory: dispersed practices and integrative practices (Schatzki, 1996). The performance of dispersed practices requires understanding of how to do something – they are activities that can be abstracted from specific acts of consumption and could apply to other contexts (Arsel & Bean, 2013; Warde, 2005). The “dispersion” of such practices consists in their widespread occurrence across different sectors of social life, a breadth that helps distinguish them from integrative practices. (Schatzki, 1996, p. 91). In other words, when the doings and sayings constituting disperses practices become tied to particular arrays of goals, purposes, and emotions, those practices could not appear in a wide variety of situations – they become “integrative” and constitutive of particular domains of social life (Schatzki, 1996, p. 91-8). Integrative practices, thus, require both an understanding of how to do something and knowledge of the contexts in which the practice is embedded (Arsel & Bean, 2012; Warde, 2005). The notion of “teleoaffective structure” is instrumental in differentiating dispersed from integrative practices, for it is its presence that sets integrative practices apart from dispersed practices (Arsel & Bean, 2013). The label “teleoaffective structure” aims to describe the

ends and aspirations of practical activities (Hartmann, 2013). It accounts for the fact that practice-behaviors are not merely linked by certain social rules and understandings, but are also linked and guided by specific ends, correct tasks to carry out for these ends, beliefs, and emotions for the sake of those ends (Schatzki, 1996). It is then those specific emotions and aspirations, the “order of life conditions”, pursued by the practice’s participants which govern and orchestrate various dispersed practices and embed them into meaningful entities (Arsel & Bean, 2013, p. 901; Schatzki, 1996, p. 124 & 2002). As a result, it is through the teloaffective structures that dispersed practices are not indeed “dispersed into undifferentiated settings”, but rather are constrained and incorporated into larger contextual integrative practices, where objects, doings and meanings are continuously connected (Arsel & Bean, 2013, p. 901). Applying practice theory as a framework for this research, I argue that nomadic cosmopolitanism is a complex integrative practice comprised of specific considerations that govern how people act. Constitutive of this integrative practice are ideas, meanings, doings and material artifacts, which are orchestrated through three primary dispersed practices of anchoring, immersion and divestment which individuals perform throughout the course of their residence in a locale. Those dispersed practices become contextualized, transformed and incorporated within the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism through the linking and regulating role of a powerful meaning structure – the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview. As location independent consumers transition from one context to another, they perform specific clusters of dispersed practices which are connected through the meanings, competences, doings and objects that are shared across practices. Consumption emerges as an element within those practices, and is regulated, promoted and organized by the unique dominant worldview of unrooted individuals. Before I flesh out those findings in detail next, I use a few additional words to address some important conceptual ambiguities relating to the chosen research context and to describe the methodology and method of this study.

2.4 Clarifying the cosmopolitan conception

Used liberally in this study, the term “cosmopolitan” can be rather ambiguous and therefore requires clarification so that its employment here can be contextually meaningful. Cosmopolitanism is rooted in a perspective that considers the individual a “world citizen”, open to foreign others and cultures (Szerszynski & Urry, 2002). Hannerz’s foundational definition of cosmopolitanism sees it as “an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other [...] an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences” (1990, p. 239). Going beyond the original conception of world citizenship, he further conceptualizes cosmopolitanism as an active predisposition. This dynamic perspective has been further expanded in the consumer literature, where Thompson & Tambyah (1999) have suggested that cosmopolitanism is a process, an aspiration, something that one needs to work on. In Figueiredo and Cayla’s view (2011) cosmopolitanism is an ideology – a set of practices and skills that must be learned – which reinforces ideals attached to flexibility, adaptability, mobility, and diversity that provide individuals with motivation for moving and seeking new and different places. Reflecting the same idea are also Woodward, Skrbis and Bean (2008), who, following Bourdieu, frame cosmopolitanism as a disposition – a set of attitudes, outlooks and practices, particular competencies, modes of managing meanings, and various forms of mobility.

However, foregrounding the idea that “cosmopolitanism is a conscious and voluntary choice ... tends to overlook the unintended and lived cosmopolitanism[s ... that emerge] ... primarily [as] a function of coerced choices or a side-effect of unconscious decisions” (Beck, 2002, p. 7, as cited in Skey, 2013). This notion is indicative of an elaborate postmodern debate on *who* is a cosmopolitan and *what* makes someone a *true* cosmopolitan (see Roudometof, 2005; Skrbis, Kendall, & Woodward, 2004). Hannerz (1990), for instance, has contrasted cosmopolitans with locals and tourists. Namely, he posits that cosmopolitans are people who are free from the biases of their home culture, whereas locals view their home culture as ultimate reality; tourists, on the other hand, are locals who expose themselves to other cultures, but do so out of

curiosity, not because they view other cultures as having any intrinsic merit or relevance to them (Cannon & Yarpak, 2002). This frame of reference has been rendered problematic as it denies the authenticity of aspirational cosmopolitan experiences, or culturally broadening experiences, that individuals who do not disembody from their home culture seek after. Two conceptions of cosmopolitanism balance the dynamics of this conversation – (1.) cosmopolitanism as a practice which is apparent in things that people do and say to positively engage with “the otherness of the other” and the oneness of the world, and (2.) cosmopolitanism as a moral ideal (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009). Both conceptions are dimensions of cosmopolitanism which, although analytically distinct, are intrinsically related at the level of empirical reality – “in some particular contexts more than others, concrete individuals embrace and mobilize, with different degrees of reflexivity, certain cosmopolitan values and ideas which allow them to develop a cosmopolitan imagination and a moral standpoint. Where in some social settings cosmopolitan sensibilities remain latent, in other contexts, they are more actively and consciously displayed by people.” (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009, p. 2). The difficulty in striking a theoretical equilibrium between these two conceptions has been a source of elaborate academic discourse on who are indeed the true cosmopolitans.

On the one hand, the label “cosmopolitan” has been used in the literature as an umbrella term for too wide of a spectrum of consumer types and dispositions – from globe traversing festival goers to rooted individuals with a preference for foreign-made cars. Often vague definitions used in the literature have rendered the term cosmopolitanism a “conceptual dumping ground” for a wide variety of activities and features, turning into a “catch-all phrase that renders its meaning irrelevant” (Skey, 2013, p. 250; Pollock et al., 2000; Skrbis et al., 2004). As Skey poignantly marks, “the number of activities labelled as cosmopolitan has included everything from Western shoppers purchasing foreign goods in a local supermarket [...] to Mujahideen fighters in Bosnia taking up arms to support ‘their besieged Muslim brethren’ [...]” (2013, p. 250).

On the other hand, narrow conceptualizations single out as quintessential representations of true cosmopolitanism certain privileged groups, whose access to economic, cultural and political resources enables them to move freely “within the socio-economic circuits of the global economy” (Thompson & Tambyah 1999, p. 228). Kanter (1995) defines cosmopolitans as “card carrying members of the world class” who are rich in concepts, competence and connections (1995, pp. 22–23), have access to the latest and most marketable knowledge, and possess the intellectual and social ability to operate at “superior” standards anywhere in the world (Skrbis et al., 2004). The elitist, upper middle-class of cosmopolitans, members of a transnational professional strata (Featherstone, 1995) and global business networks have been often embraced as a research context in consumer studies interested in modern global nomadism (Bardhi & Arnould, 2006; Bardhi et al., 2012; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Scholarship has stressed, however, the need to overcome the gendered, class and ethnocentric biases the surface in the cosmopolitan debate and has pointed towards the existence of cosmopolitan attitudes among ordinary and working-class groups (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009; see also Lamont & Aksartova, 2002).

In this research, I embrace an encompassing understanding that cosmopolitanism is neither a normative ideal nor a sophisticated intellectual and aesthetic stance, but rather a quotidian empirical phenomenon: people’s disposition to think, feel, and imagine beyond existing group boundaries and to transform their everyday practices and identities (Saito, 2011). Placing cosmopolitanism in the discussion about globalization and mobility reviewed earlier, I second Woodward, Skrbis and Bean’s position that it is incorrect to see “globalization as a necessary and sufficient condition for the emergence of cosmopolitanism. Globalized we all may be but this doesn’t make us cosmopolitans. One does not need to be globally mobile in order to possess cosmopolitan values.” (2008, p. 5). This is an important point, as consumer studies concerned with consumption of mobile migrants have almost exclusively employed the term “cosmopolitan”, along side, and as a synonym to, other broader markers of mobility such as the term “global nomad”. Hence, as this point emphasizes, and as the

discussion reviewed above illustrates, the conception of cosmopolitanism as used in this research requires definition and contextualization.

First, I understand cosmopolitanism not as an exclusive byproduct of the elite life of mobile professionals, but as something that can be traced in the practices and beliefs of real individuals throughout the social spectrum (see Phillips & Smith, 2008). This is mirrored in Vertovec and Cohen's (2002 p. 13) advance that the cosmopolitan individual is one who has a distinctive set of attitudes, and a discernible corpus of practices. In distinguishing between attitudes and practices as two components of the cosmopolitan individual, the authors append practices to attitudes, suggesting that to be cosmopolitan involves a mode of acting or performing, as much as it does thinking and feeling (Woodward et al., 2008). In other words, cosmopolitanism is not only embodied and enacted, but also felt, imagined, consumed and fantasized (Skrbis et al., 2004). This is a central point of departure for this study, as it is where the theoretical and contextual lenses of my inquiry converge.

Second, reflecting the notion that the cosmopolitan condition is widely but not randomly distributed over the social spectrum (Phillips & Smith, 2008), I construct and adopt the term "nomadic cosmopolitan" to refer to individuals who are (1.) well situated within their cosmopolitan disposition and (2.) are enabling and enacting this disposition through nomadic multidirectional mobility between urban scapes. What the compound "nomadic cosmopolitan" lacks in wordsmithery, phonetic elegance or novelty, it makes up in clarity and simplicity of embedded meaning – it evades the commentary that is concerned with internalized or enacted cosmopolitans sensibilities, and unambiguously marks the condition of nomadic mobility that frames the living experiences of these individuals. With this clarification noted, I allow myself to use the terms "nomadic cosmopolitan" and "urban nomad" interchangeably in this text, as by the virtue of contemporary social vocabulary and paradigmatic meaning, both terms are sensitive to the controversies of the rhetorical debates described above, and both allude to the same notion.

In summary, I adopt the term “nomadic cosmopolitans” as an inclusive marker of the modern day nomads who embody the essence of the cosmopolitan disposition – defined by conscious openness to the world and active-culture seeking behavior – and who may be at different stages of their familiarity with the mobile nomadic lifestyle; it denotes people from different walks of life and with different professional orientations, some having just having arrived at their second or third country of residence, others just having returned to their home country for an unknown period of time, others yet, revisiting a familiar location where they have been in the past⁷. It is those nomadic cosmopolitans that constitute the research context of this study.

3 METHODOLOGY

The line of inquiry in this study, as situated within the practice theoretical paradigm, de-emphasizes and de-centers the individual as the subject and instead foregrounds the practice as the unit for inquiry. The research questions however, nonetheless, call for turning to the subject for answers to the “what” and “how” questions that are framed and underpinned by practice theory. Thus, on this quest for better understanding of cosmopolitans’ consumption practices and analyzing the discourse of the accounts they share, this research makes use of hermeneutic phenomenology. The philosophical point of departure is rooted in that of Heidegger’s (1962) existential phenomenology, or following Gadamer (1978/2008) – within “philosophical hermeneutics”. The hermeneutical phenomenological perspective that I have adopted has guided me to be “presuppositionless”, avoiding temptations to embrace expectations early on and to frame the research within “predetermined set of fixed procedures, techniques and concepts that would rule-govern the research project” (van Manen, 1997, p. 29). Instead, the philosophical base of the hermeneutical phenomenological tradi-

⁷ A definition that perhaps embodies this notion best in term of social categorization in the literature is that of the “middling migrants” – those who do not represent elites or extremes of socio-economic status and power, privilege and poverty, but instead are “very much of the middle” (Conradson & Latham, 2005).

tion allowed me to unfold my inquiry in a manner that was reflective, insightful, and open to experience, thus clearly, yet openly guiding my position as a researcher, the process of data analysis and my considerations of rigor and credibility (Laverty, 2008; van Manen, 1997).

Clarifying my approach to pre-understanding about the phenomenon was important, because I am personally familiar with the lifestyle of nomadic cosmopolitanism and have been directly immersed in it for a length of time. The concept of pre-understanding is thus not only of significance for my orientation in this study as a researcher, but is indeed also central in my chosen methodological framework of philosophical hermeneutics, for pre-understanding is understood to enable rather than constrain the interpreter. Arnold and Fischer (1994), clarify further:

The [pre-]understanding of consumer researchers is found in two interrelated traditions – experience as a consumer and experience as a researcher. [...] Philosophical hermeneutics counsels us to capitalize more fully on [pre-]understanding rather than trying to put it aside when we take up our research. [Pre-]understanding also results from knowledge of accumulated theories and research findings concerning consumer behavior. Our theoretical knowledge of attitudes, learning, socialization, and other consumer behavior concepts gives us an additional basis for making sense of consumer behavior. We acknowledge that the enterprise of seeking such insight is shaped by our particular temporally, socially, and culturally conditioned [pre-]understanding of our subject and of science in general. We do not put this prejudice aside but instead use it to construct a coherent account.”
(Arnold and Fischer, 1994, p. 57)

Self-reflexivity and pre-understanding are understood differently in phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology (Laverty, 2008). While in the former, pre-understanding and reflection are called for so that the researcher can become aware of his/hers biases and assumptions in order to bracket them (set them aside), in the latter, the biases and assumptions of the researcher are not set aside, but rather are “embedded and essential to interpretive process” (Laverty, 2008, p. 28). The researcher is encouraged to give considerable thought to their own experience and to “explicitly claim

the ways in which their position or experience relates to the issues being researched” (Lavery, 2008, p. 28). This methodological distinction renders hermeneutic phenomenology suitable for this research and particularly accommodating to its objectives, as it allowed me to use my own experiences as a global nomad in a way that enriches, rather than hinders the interpretive processes in this study. Having spent almost my entire adulthood in temporary mobility, serially relocating between countries and cities in pursuit of education and employment opportunities, I am intimately familiar with the experiences pertinent to nomadic cosmopolitan mobility. Permitted by the hermeneutical approach and philosophical positioning of this research, I was thus able to engage freely in a process of self-reflection that paralleled the research process itself and has been embedded in the interpretive process.

4 METHOD

4.1 Data collection

The approach to data collection involved phenomenological interviews, introspection and participant observation of informants' style of dress and belongings. Data collection was undertaken between January 2016 and January 2017. The details of interviewing and analysis procedures are outlined below.

4.1.1 Interviews

In line with the methodological orientation of this research, I used in-depth phenomenological interviews for data collection (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). I interviewed five individuals, each with different nationality, professional background and pattern of mobility. The total duration of the interviews was 7 hours and 20 minutes. One of the conversations was excluded from the analysis because the informant had lived only in one foreign country and the relocation seemed to be more of a permanent kind, thus the individual did not fit the adopted typology of a global nomad. The individual conversations lasted from fifty minutes to up to three hours; one of the interviews was conducted in the informant's home, whereas all other four interviews took place in several coffee shops in the city of Helsinki, Finland. Both environments supported the saliency of the experience of mobile life, as informants either commented on the frequency with which they use places such as coffee shops for work or emersion in a locale, or the one informant interviewed in her home had the opportunity to comment on surrounding possessions and artifacts of consumption in mobility.

After consent to audio record the interviews was obtained and anonymity and confidentiality was ensured (Thompson et al., 1989), the interviews began with introductory "grand tour" questions (McCracken, 1988) asking informants about their back-

ground, origin, occupations, interests, countries of residence, reasons for relocation and length of stay. Thus, the informants were invited to describe themselves and their lives in their own terms and to situate themselves in the conversation with a disposition towards comfortable sharing about their life stories and experiences. Next, because practices and consumptions experiences are broadly and widely weaved into daily performances and experiences and are not necessarily incident-specific, a “retrospective anchoring and profusion technique” was used to situate the informants into past time periods from their lives in mobility, by tapping into contextual cues from those periods (Otnes et al., 2007). For instance, informants were asked to recall a period of relocation and to describe what was it like to prepare for departure, to arrive in a new environment, to unpack their belongings in a new residence. Once the participants seemed to have been sufficiently anchored in that period, a follow-up prompt guided the informants to recalling and discussing consumption experiences such as first time encountering the new marketplaces (shops, malls, grocery stores, interacting with service providers etc.) and the following continuous interactions with the marketplace. Examples of questions asked at that point are “Do you remember the first day after your arrival in location X?”, or “Can you describe an ordinary day of your life while you lived in X?”. Almost without exception, these questions evoked stories that included various practices, consumption episodes and encounters with the marketplace. Follow-up questions then probed for specific experiences associated with those episodes, and detailed descriptions of those encounters (see Appendix for a summary of questions asked). The retrospective anchoring allowed the participants to become re-situated in the past so that the profusion of perceptions about their consumption experiences from that time period could become available for recollection (Otnes et al., 2007). Further, this approach allowed for the collection of “particularistic data” that reported on specific experiences associated with contexts in place and time that are unique and variable, as are those in the lives of cosmopolitan nomads

(Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993, p. 345)⁸. As all participants were in a period of mobility at the time of the interviews, they were also asked to share introspections about their experiences at present as well. Thus, a holistic understanding was achieved of the nature of the researched phenomenon as it is manifested throughout a continuous temporality.

Overall, following Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1989), with the exception of the initial introductory questions, the dialogue was set by the respondents and no narrow topics of interest were probed for or predetermined questions asked. The dialogue was circular, and the flow of follow-up descriptive questions was determined by the conversation itself; such questions avoided abstractions and used informants own terms with the aim to open up the thoughts and experiences that participants were revealing (Thompson et al., 1989). All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim.

4.1.2 Introspection

Building understanding of my own experiences as an insider to the phenomenon was not intended at the outset. Having been immersed for many years in a nomadic cosmopolitan lifestyle and having knowledge of consumer culture and consumer behavior theoretics, I wanted to begin data collection as open-minded and as free of bias and assumptions as possible. Due to my demanding professional schedule, data collection stretched over a span of a year, in the midst of which I had to relocate from my

⁸ Walendorf and Brucks (1993) discuss different levels of specificity of introspective data, ranging from particularistic to generalized introspective reports. Being introspective in character, phenomenological data is thus subject to such variation. The authors describe that “particularistic data are provided when an introspector reports on specific experiences associated with a unique context in place and time. Generalized data are provided when an introspector reports his/her beliefs about his/her typical or common experiences or responses. [...] Although researchers are ultimately interested in articulating general principles that produce regularities in human behavior, general conclusions about regularities in human phenomena are soundest when based on data about specific states or events. Such data allow the researcher to systematically analyze patterns of regularities across numerous instances rather than rely on informal conclusions drawn by informants on the basis of their imperfect recall of their past.” (p. 345). This categorization of data relates to problems associated with availability heuristics in sampling of life events - namely, “a data set of events selected from memory will be comprised of events that come to mind most easily [...] Reliance on availability leads people to select events with high salience and extremity” (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993, p. 344). With these remarks in mind, using retrospective anchoring and profusion techniques was chosen as preferable approach towards narrative elicitation as opposed to a prompt for general recall of experiences.

place of residence at the time (Finland) to a new location (United States) for a period of eight months. At the time of my departure, I had already conducted several interviews which confirmed the viability and potential of the research topic. As a result, I decided to use my relocation as an opportunity to engage even more reflexively within this interpretive inquiry and to keep a diary of my consumption practices and experiences in mobility. This provided the opportunity for fully immersing myself in the data and the experience, “in-dwelling with the phenomena” under investigation (Hirschman, 1986), and engaging in the hermeneutic circle of understanding and co-constructing the data with the participants.

As a result, in addition to using in-depth phenomenological interviews with recruited informants, this study utilizes a syncretic form of introspection, where “introspection expands the sample beyond the researcher ... [and] incorporates details of the researcher's life experience that s/he is willing to document” (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993, p. 341). Unlike other forms of introspection (e.g. interactive introspection) syncretic combinations of introspection do not have the researcher share his/her introspections with informants, but instead, both researcher and informants are included as elements in the sample with little, if any, differentiation made between the two during data analysis (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993). Thus, by adding “contemporaneous reporting” (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993, p. 343) of my current internal states throughout my consumption experiences to the emic perspective of the cosmopolitan consumers who inform the insight within the data set of the study, this research approaches the phenomenon with analytical closeness and from the vantage point of richly textured interpretive perspective.

Throughout my own brief period of relocation that occurred during data collection, I kept a journal where I recorded experiences, impressions and reflections on consumption episodes that I considered topical for the purposes of this study. Even though I have been immersed in the cosmopolitan mobile lifestyle for more than a decade, I opted out of including introspective reflections of previous consumption experiences during residencies in other cities or countries. I did so in an effort to avoid construct-

ing generalizations about my own behaviors based on vivid fragments extracted from distant memory, as well as to avoid underreporting of the variability in my behavior that may have occurred in response to contextual factors which may no longer be salient (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993). As no a priori themes were developed at the start of this research, I recorded a variety of instances without actively engaging in purposeful selection of the events with a view of their potential suitability for analysis and interpretation later on. Excerpts of this assembled data set appear throughout the analysis alongside excerpts from the phenomenological interviews with the respondents. As in Hirschman (1992), this source of data was used as a “direct experiential testimony” (p. 160) of the phenomenon, and a template against which emergent themes could be validated and further enriched.

4.1.3 Sampling procedures

Purposeful sampling was used to select informants recruited either through indirect referrals from people familiar with the aims of the study, or through direct contact by personalized messages in two social networks – LinkedIn and Inter Nations⁹.

The process of participant selection in this research was subject to a simple criterion – all informants have had to have lived the experience of serial relocation to more than two countries, where they would have moved voluntarily and for reasons different from tourism, and they must exhibit a belief that their current locale is temporary¹⁰. While my selection process did not discriminate the participants on the basis of the length of their stay in their temporary residencies, all informants had lived in their various locales for periods longer than six months. The relaxed approach to this selection criteria was a result of an effort to exclude assumptions that a certain duration of

⁹ LinkedIn is a popular global social platform for professional and business networking, whereas Inter Nations is an international social platform through which expats around the globe can connect with one another and engage in social activities, discussions and events worldwide.

¹⁰ As mentioned, one participant, who was recommended by an advisor familiar with the research, did not satisfy the residence multiplicity condition as he had only recently moved to his first country or residence outside of his homeland. While, the insights generated from his interview were excluded from the analysis, they were nonetheless useful as backdrop against which differences in the consumption practices of serial nomads were indeed noticeable.

residency is necessary to enable the mobile consumption condition, and to allow for the informants' actual life circumstances and experiences to construct my understanding. Further, assessing participants' belief that their present locale is temporary, aimed to include in the research individuals who are fully immersed in the mobile mindset; without having advanced knowledge about participants' disposition towards notions of home, national identity and origin, no assessment could be made a priori about their broader, encompassing identification with the un-rooted and deterritorialized qualities of cosmopolitanism. However, throughout data collection, all informants included in the analysis expressed detached relationship with their countries of origin, and demonstrated fluid perceptions of notions of home and belonging. Thus, the resulting sample consisted of a group of individuals that comfortably exemplified the definition of a nomadic cosmopolitan adopted here, and were different enough from one another to enhance possibilities of nuanced understanding of the practices and consumption moments enacted and occurring in the context of cosmopolitan mobility.

Table 1 provides a summary of the informant characteristics.

Table 1: Informant characteristics

Name*	Age	Gender	Nationality	Education	Occupation	Countries of residence (duration)
Erika	31	Female	Finnish	Graduate	Visual Artist	Finland (25yrs); Canada (1yr); USA (1yr); France (upcoming)
Paula	31	Female	Italian	Graduate	Investment Consultant	Italy (21yrs); Luxembourg (7mo); UK (3yrs); Finland (5mo)
Mike	40	Male	English	Post graduate	Photographer	UK (on and off); USA (18yrs); Spain (7yrs); France (1yr); Denmark (6mo); Italy (n/a); Finland (5yrs)
Anjali	40	Female	Indian	Graduate	IT Specialist	India (24yrs)Malaysia (6mo); Singapore (1yr); Japan (5yrs); Finland (2yrs)
Myself	32	Female	Bulgarian	Graduate	Marketing	Bulgaria (18yrs); USA (8yrs); Canada (1yr); Finland (5yrs)

* informants are presented with pseudonyms

4.2 Hermeneutic data interpretation

In line with interpretivist methods for data analysis, the interview transcripts were subject to iterative part-to-whole analysis where the data set was interpreted within a hermeneutical framework with two main phases: impressionistic ideographic intratext readings and intertextual analysis of the texts (Thompson, 1997). First, after all data was collected, I started individual readings of each interview and my own introspective diary and began identifying passages and sentences that I categorized into broader emergent themes. In this process, I tried to understand how each informant approached and experienced mobility and what activities, including consumption moments, they performed during episodes of mobility. I noted individual tendencies, consumption behaviors, patterns and practices that the participants spoke of as they were recalling the processes of entering and existing transient environments or of getting acquainted with new surroundings. After repeating the process between five to seven times per interview and no further patterns in the individual data were uncovered, I began looking for cross-commonalities among the emergent themes across the different interviews. At this stage, I sought to grasp a more holistic understanding of the practices that myself and consumers across the data set employed to manage the various demands of their mobile lifestyles; groupings of these demands emerged and respective responses were categorized. As this iterative process was repeated several times, I assessed the belonging of different incidents within the data as part of the emerging categories across the data and compared the thematic relationships that emerged between each set. This process continued until I was able to make sense of the totality of the data set, such that all passages in the text as a whole began to connect into a coherent interpretation of the phenomenon (Arnold & Fischer, 1994) and I was able to construct accounts and interpretations of cosmopolitans' consumption practices in the broader context of their collective, culturally situated worldviews. These interpretations were a result of the alignment between my self-interpreted constructions and pre-understandings, and those of each participant, thus reflecting many constructions or multiple realities (Laverty, 2008).

As a discovery-oriented, phenomenological-hermeneutical inquiry, these processes of data collection and analysis were initially open to revelation without setting beforehand specific expectations for the particular theoretical frame towards which the interpreted data will have relevance. Once patterns became to surface during data collection and preliminary analysis, and they began to connect in a coherent representation of the consumption processes enacted by global nomads, the collected account of the studied phenomenon began to point toward the need for a theoretical perspective that could aid its understanding above and beyond the descriptive. As previously justified, practice theory, thus, emerged as an enabling theoretical framework that allowed for an analytical conceptual breakthrough (Hirschman, 1986) that could account for the emergent complex and variable tenets of the consumption activities and experiences described by the informants. In the next section of this paper, I present the findings of this research and contextualize the emergent understanding with the theoretical spectrum of social practice theory.

5 PRACTICING COSMOPOLITANISM

The primary objective for this study was to provide an account of the core consumption practices used by contemporary nomadic consumers as they move about the world, and transition in and between different cultural and marketplace environments. I positioned this inquiry within the theoretical conception that the essence of the cosmopolitan condition, which transcends into the global phenomenon of nomadic mobility, is manifested in both the individual's (1.) attitudes and (2.) practices. This notion emerged from and echoed clearly in the interviewee's stories and the expositions of their experiences. This section begins with a presentation of the primary anchor points around which the global nomads' attitudes take shape and within which lays the quintessence of their grasp of the world and of themselves. This commentary sets the stage for a contextualized understanding of their practices – activities, performances, and talk – which are elaborated on in the second part of this chapter.

5.1 Cosmopolitan attitudes: thoughts and feelings

5.1.1 Belonging to the world: the nomadic cosmopolitan subject position

I: Please, introduce yourself.

Anjali: My name is Anjali. I am 40 years-old. I work in IT.

I: Thank you Anjali. Where are you from?

Anjali: I am a world citizen. Well...I was just born in India. I have always felt that I don't entirely fit in [there].

A powerful collective thread emerged almost in passing in the introductory remarks of my informants – the willing and unconditional self-categorization as a “world citizen”. Stated as a matter-of-fact, a detail that supposedly had little bearing on all else, this reoccurring mention of a self-proclaimed global citizenship was a referent that ran deep through these global nomads’ self-conceptions. Without prompt and without knowing the contextual positioning of this study, all participants described themselves as “global-“ or “world-“ citizens, and underlined their rejection of traditional ethnic or national labels. For many, the seeds of this identification could be traced back to early childhood when keen curiosity towards the world and interest to travel emerged as strong aspirations, but became only fully fleshed out once one embarked on their first trip abroad:

Ever since I have been a child I have felt the need to move somewhere to a different city, location, whatever, because I felt that ... I don't know... somehow I have had this eagerness to go explore for the longest time. But I think, when I really did move abroad, it was confirmed to me that “this is how I understand myself”. I have found myself content living in Finland in several locations, but to consider myself as a global citizen, to validate that to myself, I needed proof. I had to go somewhere to be sure of that. To be something that I can now state here. (Erika)

For global nomads, the cosmopolitan self-concept is a prominent source of motivation and an agent of its own creation (Gecas, 1982). The pronounced sense of being a dif-

ferent “other”, of belonging to a global tribe of “others”, influenced the informants' perceptions towards their situated being in the world – it framed their sense of belonging to their transient residencies, while it also ascertained their sense of independence and anonymity.

A rare instance when this self-conception evoked an internalized conflict was when it stood in a way of an effortless presentation of oneself to others. Questions such as “Where are you from” emerged as problematic:

Oh...well...[pauses in contemplation]. It depends on how you look at it. I was born in England..., but I actually grew up most of my childhood in between England and America. I spent my 20s in Spain and that also kind of influenced very much “where I am from”, and I have lived in seven different countries, so that does confuse things quite a bit too. (Mike)

These difficulties, however, stem rather from the feeling that such questions are too simplistic to account for a life story that is complex, and too constrictive to capture in a single word an aspirational lifestyle that one is proud of having managed to lead. Erika's elaboration is poignant in that regard:

[...]“Where are you from, what do you do”, ... I have always felt that it doesn't resonate as something that I would like to bring up first I feel is that this is not important and I would rather skip that part and tell people other things about myself and let them form their opinions on me based on those things. And all the different places where I have been make me - myself. And when I have had more deep social relations with people, I have been able to go past that [Finnish origin]...I feel comfortable and accepted.. More ..belonging. I have had more experiences of not-belonging in my own country, where nobody really questions where you are from. (Erika)

What is embedded in the essence of urban nomads' strive to seek new horizons is a feeling of displacement or monotony in their native cultures, or a belief that one can more successfully achieve one's full potential through immersion in stimulating diverse environments. Informants often expressed lack of a sense of belonging to their native cultures and revealed that a purposeful and directional pursuit of a better fit elsewhere is behind much of the justification for embracing a nomadic lifestyle. Expe-

periences in host countries were thus often judged by the sense of belonging that the environment could evoke. However, a parallel notion of appreciation for anonymity which foreign contexts can facilitate also appeared in the interviews. Paula for instance shares that when abroad she feels the freedom to be herself without worrying about not fitting in a certain cultural environment: *“I remember in London I was going around with this very horrible dress and no one would really care about that. If you do that in Milan everyone would look at you like ‘what the hell is wrong with you’. That is one of the things that I love when I am abroad – that nobody cares about what I do or how I look, no one judges me if I am running on the streets at 5 in the morning.”*

The two perceptions of belonging and anonymity are not oppositional of one another, but rather complimentary. A place where one feels comfortable, is a place where one could be him/herself without feeling watched, different, “the other”. This ability to blend with the crowd, and control one’s own projected image was interpreted as a display of belonging and freedom. As a result, self-identifications with nationality and a static, fixed residency in a single place were perceived as restrictive. Erika for instance considers identity as *“something in flux and changing [...] not based on location, [...] more connected to your interests in life.. how do you understand the world in a way”*. For global nomads, the understanding of who they are is a collective of all the different places where they have been – Erika quite literally verbalizes this notion as she insists – *“all the different places where I have been make me - myself”*. Believing that one belongs to the world and its diversity, and that the world belongs to one, is a primary attitudinal position that resurfaces and materializes through different meaning structures in global nomad’s consumption practices. As such an essential meaning structure, the self-categorization as a “world citizen” is an instrumental behavioral directive in two ways. First, as I will elaborate next, it is an enabling element of a shared cosmopolitan worldview which governs the behaviors, doings and beliefs of global nomads. Second, it constitutes the core of a nomadic cosmopolitan’s embodied subject position. A person’s identity consists in the collection of subject positions she assumes in participating in a range of practices (Schatzki, 1996). In the case of global

nomads, this cosmopolitan self-conception is a primary organizational foci in their practices.

5.1.2 Understanding mobility: the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview as a teloaffective structure

Aside from instances when one had to verbally¹¹ define themselves and recount their origin to others, the sense of cosmopolitan self was rarely seen as a source of challenge or conflict. Instead, it emerged as a prerequisite for a successful existence within a mobile lifestyle. Viewed through the cosmopolitan lens of self, the ever changing rhythm of mobility is seen as a benefit, not a burden; a source of satisfaction, not hardship. Mobility is understood as an adventure only possible through continuous relocation, an opportunity to explore the world in a way that tourism does not allow you to. Even more importantly, however, the cosmopolitan identity conception changes one's understanding of the consequences of mobility in a striking way. Firmly anchored within their cosmopolitan identities, nomads feel rooted in their mobility, not in their place of origin; they feel belonging instead of detachment, and instead of being lonely, they rejoice over anonymity. This understanding of oneself and one's surroundings constitute a powerful cosmopolitan worldview, which emerges as the primary prism through which nomadic cosmopolitans perceive the lifeworld. It was this understanding of themselves, that helps give sense to their behaviors and practices, and shapes their disposition towards the mobile lifestyle.

It was without exception that the nomadic cosmopolitans in this study interpreted their mobile lifestyles as positive, joyous episodes that have afforded them freedom, and an opportunity to find themselves and to ground themselves to a comfortable, desirable understanding of self. Such positive disposition diverges from the findings of previous studies which report feelings of difficulty associated with enacting a cosmopolitan disposition and managing life in mobility (see Thompson & Tambyah,

¹¹ In contrast to symbolic appropriation during consumption which is a constituting element of practices and was often used as non-verbal cue for cosmopolitanism.

1999). For the global nomads in this study, the sense of one's cosmopolitan self emerged as a foundational meaning structure. It motivated the almost unconditional acceptance of a lifestyle, which may be perceived as effortful and particularly destabilizing by traditional consumers. Nomadic cosmopolitans embrace their global identity strongly, and for them, this subject position motivates a strikingly positive outlook towards an otherwise challenging lifestyle. Where others would see uncertainty, the informants saw adventure and freedom to become; when others would longingly seek for a connection to their origins, these global nomads flourished in the novelty of their surroundings. Modern nomads find stability in the continuous motion forward. The prominently salient cosmopolitan identity facilitates feeling at ease in mobility, and conversely – feeling constrained and restricted while at base. The following examples illuminate different facets of this notion:

Funny how effortless it is to pack your entire life into two suitcases and go. I am surprised by my lack of emotion toward all of these things around me, piled in boxes, ready to go to a dusty storage. It won't matter if I wouldn't see them again. And isn't it odd, how little I have actually accumulated for the years at base here [Finland]. It seems to me that I am packing the exact same things that I came with. [...] 8.40 pm. Boarding done, carving space in my seat as we take off. It feels as your soul is lifting and life begins its course again after a short pause for rest that perhaps lasted a tad too long.... (personal diary)

My recollection describes a subtle emotion which is mostly subdued when one is settled in a place for longer periods of time, but it is nonetheless there – the feeling of stagnancy and need to keep on moving. Once awakened, this emotion takes over and reveals itself, liberated by the relief brought through the anticipation for the novelty ahead.

At the beginning you do it because it is fascinating. You want to do it because you get to know a different country, different people - it is a completely different experience than being a tourist. But then after a while you miss your family, your country and you decide to go back.. the problem is that you get somehow addicted to this I think [to living abroad]. When you start traveling you can't live in the same place anymore after that. It opens up something in you... it is not easy to go back and stay there forever because you feel that you want to know more people, to see more places, to keep at it.. so yeah, sometimes it

feels like...oh I don't know.. I would call it an addiction..yeah. I am really happy to be back at it. (Paula)

Paula describes the thrill of the cosmopolitan lifestyle as addictive, thus rendering the nomadic global identity as something that is dormant, which once awoken can no longer be subdued. In fact, the option to stay still is inconceivable:

I can hop around from country to country all the time and I would love it. Actually, I can't imagine having it another way. (Anjali)

The nomadic cosmopolitans' attitudes towards their mobility put a positive spin on just about all manifestations of this lifestyle. The behaviors of others, the appeal of the cultural environment, one's actions and desires are all evaluated according to the extent to which they are considered consistent with the nomadic identity. Circumstances or activities that threaten the believability of this identity are seen as annoying, embarrassing even; in those instances, behaviors aiming to enhance self-verification processes and to ensure that others do see the individual the way she sees herself unfold quickly.

Anjali: When we arrived in Japan, the first night we wanted to do was go out for dinner. So we go to this restaurant and my colleagues [all from India] all order Indian curry. I mean how embracing is that?! You just came from there! Would it kill you to try something new? I was so embraced!

I: What did you order?

Anjali: I ordered Japanese curry! It was curry - but Japanese!

It is the nomads' anchoring to their cosmopolitan worldview that minimizes the tensions of mobility, and stabilizes their sense of self in transient environments. It motivates an unconditional embrace of an otherwise challenging and destabilizing lifestyle, and facilitates an understanding of mobility as an act of freedom; it influences both perceptions of one's experiences as superior to those of others, and it provides a backdrop against which objects, environments and actions can be evaluated. It is upon this foundational worldview and understanding of oneself, where global nomads' practices unfold.

As such, this cosmopolitan worldview emerges as a composite teloaffective structure within which the nomadic cosmopolitans' intentions, purposes, beliefs, wants and emotions reside. It is the cosmopolitan worldview that contextualizes one's performances, acquisitions and experiences during mobility and motivates one's judgments, perceptions and activities. It links the individual's social and personal identity projects to his/hers practices and behaviors. Maintaining and validating this worldview is a "specific end", a project that orchestrates and gives meaning to diverse, temporally and spatially dispersed practices that individuals perform on a daily basis and connects them to the larger interpretive practice of *being* a nomadic cosmopolitan and acting in accordance. This deeply embedded cosmopolitan worldview, which drives the individual's understanding, self-conception and actions, is the operational structure which continuously connects objects, doings and emerging meanings and embeds them into the template of practicing nomadic cosmopolitanism. As a result, nomadic consumers evaluate objects, possessions, brands and activities according to their capacity to facilitate, enhance and authenticate their worldview. I illustrate this abstraction in detail in the next section.

5.2 Cosmopolitan practices: acts & performances

5.2.1 The practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism

Being a cosmopolitan nomad entails a disposition towards the world and an understanding of the organization of the lifeworld that differs from those of rooted individuals. Nomadism shapes the way individuals purchase and consume, organize time and spaces, form values and gain competences. Nomadic cosmopolitanism is a performance based upon an attitudinal point of departure which regulates a person's worldview and directs his actions, doings and sayings. As such, nomadic cosmopolitanism is a complex integrative practice, where material artifacts, actions and meanings are linked and explicated through the powerful meaning structures embedded in the cosmopolitan worldview.

Multiple dispersed practices are incorporated within the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism. These practices – identified in the next sections as anchoring, immersion and divestment practices – host clusters of many sub-practices, actions and performances, such as traveling, packing, shopping, working, doing sports, disposing and many others. They are all interconnected and guided by the “compass” (Schatzki, 1996) of the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview – a composite teleoaffective structure which embodies the nomad’s understandings about the world and gives momentum to different temporal goals, needs and wants. All doings and saying which belong to the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism are thus linked by principles, beliefs and perspectives that are interwoven in the nomadic worldview. As a result, when participating in this integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism, nomads take account of and adhere to these guiding mandates, which structure the templates of the nomad’s behaviors and understandings. Knowing how to adhere to these templates and to be a skillful performer in the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism requires involvement and dedication to the practice. Yet, social practices are internally differentiated on many dimensions and individuals do not participate in them in identical ways (Warde, 2005). Experiences, knowledge, resources, and environment are some of the factors that affect performance. Consumer’s capacities and capabilities to enact the performance of a practice in a certain way are what structures one’s role and position within the practice, and engagement with the practice. Individuals have personal trajectories within practices and, once enrolled, subsequent immersion in a practice often has the features of a career which need not be continuous or successful, but it can progress and unfold in a certain way nonetheless (Warde, 2005). How do individuals become immersed in the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism and develop as practitioners is discussed next.

5.2.2 *Becoming a practitioner: gaining competences and know-how*

As briefly mentioned earlier, the disposition towards a nomadic lifestyle often forms early in one's life. However, knowing how to perform the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism is a competence that is acquired gradually and progressively as a result of one's immersion in the nomadic lifestyle. After being "enrolled" in the practice during the first trip abroad, nomads follow trajectories within the practice, learn-by-doing, develop skills, attach new meaning to the activity and accumulate experiences which gradually change their position within the practice (Røpke, 2009; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Warde, 2005). Changing positions within practices, in other words becoming a more skilled nomadic cosmopolitan, is manifested through changing forms of consumption, whether of objects or experiences (Warde, 2005).

For the informants in this study, the first relocation was marked in memory as a period of vulnerability and uncertainty. More importantly, however, this stretch of time was recalled as a period during which one learned how to navigate through a newly adopted dynamic lifestyle and how to negate experienced discomfort. Instances of overpacking, under-preparing or not-knowing, were recalled with forgiveness to oneself and a distant sense of understanding – as if the cosmopolitans were referring to someone else, their previous self that simply didn't know any better. Paula for instance, attributed clumsy overpacking for her first trip to fear of running out of funds to purchase what she may need: *"I brought to London so many things that I really didn't need! Oh my! [...] I think I was just afraid..... I mean I could find a lot in London, because it is not in a third world country you know..but I just didn't want to spend probably too much money because you don't know when you start a new job [...]"*. Unlike elite cosmopolitans, for whom it is their "capital and support infrastructure that enables them to live liquid [deterritorialized, mobile] lives" (Bardhi et al., 2012, p. 526), nomadic cosmopolitans need to account for employment uncertainty and possible shortages of capital. This forces them to develop skills to both foresee challenges and plan for the unexpected – this is expressed through purposeful selection of items to take with and reflected in choosing furnished accommodation, temporary co-living

spaces, and securing employment in advance, or ensuring that working remotely can be facilitated.

Once having embarked on the nomadic lifestyle and thus being enrolled in the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism, a sharp learning curve occurs during one's first major relocation abroad. Informants recalled being much more skilled and better equipped with know-how and experience to prepare for their second relocation. As Erika shares:

Erika: [The first time around], I remember I was thinking that I was packing stuff that I can leave behind. I am going to a new place, of course I am gonna do some shopping so I am going to return with a whole new set of clothes. But what happened was not that (laughs).

I: What did happen?

Erika: What happened was that when I needed clothes, for weather or for when I was painting...like bad clothes which I didn't have. I needed clothes when it was cold [...] or shoes I don't fall down with, or rubber boots for really wet weather. I ended up buying so many things from second hand [...].

It is during this first relocation, when the informants had eye-opening encounters with the realities of mobility. Uninformed errors help the novice nomad to transition from a habitual, subconscious tourist mindset, to that of an embodied, actively pursued disposition of a nomadic cosmopolitan. Erika's shift in realization about what the outcomes of mobility are illustrates this point, as she acknowledges the naivety that guided her expectations that she will be returning with a whole new wardrobe, just as a tourist on leisurely shopping trip abroad would. When a sedentary (rooted) individual travels, she enjoys the non-routine – the new places and all what is unusual there in comparison to her place of residence, and does exactly something different from what she would do at home everyday (Nowicka, 2007). In contrast, the nomadic disposition entices the cosmopolitan to settle comfortably into routinized patterns of enacted practices which offer them stability and security. For modern day nomads, the very first nomadic trip abroad creates blueprints, or templates for practices and behaviors that would be used in the future to resolve similar situations or prevent problematic experiences. This first foreign residency in the novice nomad's life is a context where

valuable transferable skills (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012) are accumulated and carried over to subsequent locations. Nomads quickly develop such distinct competences that they apply swiftly in subsequent new places of residency. Such templates encompass simple heuristics, such as how one packs for arrival or how does one sieve through her belongings before departure, as well as larger patterns of behavior concerning primary consumption experiences in the context of mobility. It is on that first trip when the processes of learning are transformative for the novice nomad and she becomes “recruited” in the career of practicing nomadic cosmopolitanism. With every subsequent trip, the practice of nomadism evolves into a composite of skills and committed performances – as people become committed to the practices they carry, their status can change to the point that they become that which they do (Becker, 1977; Shove et al., 2012). For nomadic cosmopolitans, it is during this very first trip when they wholeheartedly engage with the practice of cosmopolitanism and that commitment in the practice in turn quickly begins to reveal and shape their dominant cosmopolitan worldview.

5.2.3 Enacting the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism

With time, the behavioral blueprints that begin to take shape during one’s first relocation abroad start to settle into identifiable practice templates that frame and qualify how global nomad’s acts. The period of residency in each new country, or foreign cultural or economic context, constitute a distinct spatio-temporal entity, within which certain practices and experiences take place in an almost sequential order. That is, particular practices and doings are clustered and situated within identifiable phases nested within this spatio-temporal network of marketplace, cultural and social offerings. Thus, however vastly distinct each place of residence is from another, when viewed as spatio-temporal networks different locales reveal themselves as possessing similar qualities and structure. Nomads approach and navigate these networks by employing recurring practices which enable them to manage and stabilize their nomadic cosmopolitan performance as they arrive at, settle in and depart from a certain locale.

Even though the informants were not providing a chronological account of their experiences within a particular environment, three temporal phases emerged as contexts within which clusters of identifiable practices took place: (1.) entering the new context, (2.) settling in, and (3.) exiting the place of residence. Each phase embodies thematically situated processes – of discovering and familiarizing with the environment upon entering it, of immersing within, and detaching from it upon exiting. These temporal segments are closely associated with specific nexuses of dispersed practices within which objects, doings and meanings interact in unique ways. I identify these nexuses, or clusters of activities and performances, as three types of dispersed practices: (1.) anchoring, (2.) immersion and (3.) divestment practices. I review each next.

(1.) Entering a new context: Anchoring practices

Orienting oneself

Anchoring practices are distinct practices of orientation and stabilization that take place during the initial time period of reallocation to a brand new context. As new objects – experiences, products, brandscapes and unfamiliar service providers – reveal themselves to the nomadic cosmopolitan, anchoring practices largely influence how new settlers initially navigate the new context. Those practices would usually incorporate the very first consumption moments in a new location, which moments almost always revolve around shopping for basic necessities, such as kitchen supplies, cosmetics, and groceries. In those moments, a novel commercial and cultural context is a source of challenge that needs to be overcome so that fluent nomadic experiences can unfold. Aiming to attain control of the uncertainty, nomadic cosmopolitans engage in anchoring practices as corrective measures through which they actively seek and refer to familiar brands and retail environments in order to counteract these tensions and to facilitate smooth integrative experiences. Thus, seeking to stabilize themselves in an unfamiliar context, nomadic cosmopolitans reach out for multi-national retailers,

and big global brands with whose assortment and offering they are already familiar. Lidl, Ikea, H&M, Zara, Walgreens were mentioned as some of the retailers that facilitated the very first shopping experiences of the informants, as they sought to organize their lives and acquire first necessities in their new environments. As Erika elaborates:

Shops in North America are kind of the same - you go to Walgreens in Canada and in the US - you get the same stuff. Same thing with EU - H&M is H&M everywhere, in the EU and in North America. It is somehow annoying, but I also like the fact that I can count on these brands to get me what I might need everywhere.

The annoyance with the homogeneity that global brands offer is a prominent critique that has emerged as a result of globalization. However, in the case of nomadic cosmopolitans, the teleoaffectivity of their worldview contextualizes shopping in global retailers as positive, necessary mean to a desirable end. It instills activities otherwise incongruent with one's aspirations for authentic individuality with meaning and purpose which enhance and reinforce one's primary identity project of being a skillful carrier of the nomadic cosmopolitan practice. These well known brand names offer comfort and enhance the cosmopolitans' confidence in navigating the unfamiliar cultural and commercial scapes of their new surroundings. They deliver familiarity and consistency that enables efficient and notably effortless transition from one place to another. Consumption of these brands is a method for quickly and efficiently achieving skillful enactment of anchoring practices and settling in a new place. My personal recollection illustrates this point as well:

Tired and jet-lagged. I wake up after three hours of sleep on the very same morning of arrival so that I can catch that conference call with Helsinki. Managing this time difference will be hell.. I push through the call and look through the cupboards in the flat. There is the coffee machine, some filters, cups... no coffee. I feel annoyed, yet also excited at the thought of meeting the morning sun on the street and exploring the neighborhood on my hunt for coffee. A quick search through Maps - here we go, Walgreens on the corner, Trader Joe's 6 blocks down. I wonder if they still have those Fage yogurts... I head to Trader Joe's to stock with basic groceries. [...] (personal diary)

Enactment of anchor practices requires background knowledge and understanding of the global market offerings. Through the performance of these practices and employment of such competences, the novel environment is successfully reconfigured into a comfort zone of familiarity and stability. Anchor practices thus serve a defined role in enhancing continuity from one place to another – through their prism, mundane purchases of utilitarian products are instilled with meaning directed towards enhancing the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview and reinforcing its significance:

At the beginning, I tended to go to the same places. Because when you go to a supermarket for example you know where you can find stuff if you keep going to the same place. Whenever you change, you have to walk around, search for stuff, you don't know where things are...especially when they are really big, so it takes you hours to do your normal weekly shopping. Right away I saw that there was a Lidl nearby so of course I went there. They are the same wherever you go, the store is the same in Italy, it has the same features in Germany, in the UK as well. So even if you change country you can find the things you need quite easily. That I have found to be really useful. (Paula)

Just like Paula headed to Lidl without even considering a local alternative, Erika, for instance, went to Ikea during her very first week in Canada; I, too, rushed out to the familiar brands and retailers that I knew what to expect from. As “collections of perceptions held in the mind” (Fournier, 1998, p. 345), for nomadic consumers brands easily parallel interpersonal bonds:

As I cross the streets of this city and encounter these familiar [brand] places, I feel as if I have met a good old friend - someone I know what to expect of. Like seeing a familiar face at a party full of strangers, you approach with comfort, built upon the reliance that you will have something to talk about. A comforting feeling, but what a joy it is to meet someone new that you click with right away too...(personal diary)

Reaching out for known brands and retailers anchors the cosmopolitan consumer to their cosmopolitan worldview in a notable, yet indirect way. Through the anchoring practices enacted during the nomadic cosmopolitan's first days or months in a new environment, these global brands are instilled with meaning and purpose that carry forward to the next residence. They facilitate the nomad's ability to orient herself quickly in a new environment, navigate through a nexus of objects and doings, and

resolve need gaps, uncertainties and tensions. As a result, anchoring practices transform possessions, brands and shopping experiences, which in a different context would be perceived as uninteresting and pertinent to the masses, into meaningful manifestations of expertly enacted consumption practices.

Managing Challenges

When the novelty of the commercial context cannot be navigated effortlessly, difficulties and disappointments occur as the nomadic cosmopolitan self-conception is challenged. For instance, Erika recalls that during her first nomadic relocation, her very first experience with the foreign commercial environment entailed shopping for a phone and a phone plan:

That was horrible! [...] You need something very much, you want something very much, and it is easy for sales people to talk you into the things that are not actually what you need and want, because you have this urgency of getting something taken care of. [...] Things are different and you don't necessarily think that this is a different culture. There are all such difficult things to navigate ..phone plans and internet plans and what-nots. But those ones are the first ones I had to deal with when I moved. [...] and every time [I relocate] the process repeats. (Erika)

Such difficulties with navigating new commercial and cultural environments are particularly pronounced during one's early stages of practicing nomadic cosmopolitanism – when lack of experience threatens the performance and fluent enactment of the cosmopolitan practice. Erika's inexperience with navigating this foreign environment and successfully performing during the crucial first encounters with the new context contribute to her inability to correct the negative consumption experience. Trapped between the urgency of sorting her channels for communication with her loved ones, and the desire to obtain the phone that she so wanted, she feels cheated into a phone plan whose terms were not clearly explained to her by the foreign customer service. Her anger from the negative consuming experience is further fueled by the feeling of being treated as a foreigner – vulnerable and susceptible to deceit. This conflicts with her cosmopolitan worldview and her self-conception of a global citizen – one who is

equipped with a mindset and a skillset to thrive in a foreign environment. Such episodes challenge the successful enactment of the cosmopolitan practice and are skillfully and purposefully avoided by seasoned nomads through performing specific variations of anchoring practices that allow them to account for shortcomings of the commercial environment. For instance, when no desired brands or objects are available, nomads employ alternative strategies, directed “doings”, that allow them to outsmart the circumstances. These practices include stockpiling of products and possessions for use in the future, postponing purchases for future times when one would travel to locations where the brands/products are available, using international online retailers that can deliver desired goods from abroad, and relying on friends or relatives to bring missed products when they visit or as they travel to a target location. Mike offers an account of several of these practices:

Mike: [...]I find myself not being able to wait to go back to the UK for example. In fact some places that seemed like a nightmare to me like Oxford Str in London or the Opera Str. in Paris, suddenly took on a new life and became so appealing because of the variety of things on offer. Whereas before I would have run a mile before going to a place like that. If I didn't have the chance to travel so much I probably would be doing a lot more online shopping. [...]

I: [...] There is no Uniqlo here [Helsinki], is there?

Mike: There isn't, but I go to England quite often and to France quite often and London and Paris both have Uniqlo. You can order online as well, I haven't yet, but it is just because I always count on having regular trips to each city.

I: So that is something that you keep in mind and plan to do?

Mike: Yes, absolutely, even though I don't really like shopping in theory.

By creatively facilitating the acquisition of goods through those strategies, nomads negate negative experiences resulting from a global marketplace not evolved enough to cater to their needs. For instance, Erika found herself asking family members to send to her foreign residence what she considered essential necessities; as she got further emerged in the nomadic lifestyle she continued feeling constrained by the market's inability to accommodate her mobility: *“I would ask my parents to send me some [...] Now, when I am back in Finland for a bit, I find myself missing stuff from the US and I think I am gonna order some stuff from Amazon, but the taxes are too high [making it hard to justify]!”*. Such practices of postponing purchases for a later time or an-

other location have been identified also in other literature as zoning and synchronization activities across temporal frameworks (Figuereido, 2012). This study observed the same behavior from the different angle of compensating practices, driven by self-stabilizing motivations (identity continuity enhanced by related use of meaningful brands or products (Kleine & Baker, 2004)), and aimed at amending gaps in the offering of the marketplaces. These practices were reflective of individual attitudes demonstrating contentment in "outsmarting" the marketplace, and yet again – feeling emancipated from and in control of the commercial environment.

Such control is evident in Anjali's experience who shared that before coming to Finland she knew enough to do research on what brands and retailers are available and she realized that she might have difficult time purchasing make up in the Nordic country because the market caters mostly to women with fair complexion. As a result, she *"made sure [she] came with a good stock of several packs of foundations and powders"* just in case. Anchoring practices embody efficiency and manifestation of competence in how the nomad navigates unfamiliar places. As nomads navigate through the world, they enact such practices as solutions for problematic situations which would otherwise prove disruptive for the expatriate experience.

I: When you compare your experiences in the US and Canada, what can you tell about that?

Erika: In the US, I knew what I was doing (laughs). I got there, and I was like "right, I need this and this and this and this..". Some stores were familiar from before [residence Canada and previous visit to the US] and I just got to it. That was efficient. I wanted to be done with that part, so I can get on with the living part.

The essential purpose of anchoring practices is evidenced by Erika's statement: *"I wanted to be done with that part, so I can get on with the living part."* Anchoring practices facilitate quick transition from one place to another and allow nomadic cosmopolitans to situate themselves in a new residence efficiently. Once that is accomplished, a second temporal phase begins to unwind.

(2.) Settling in: Immersion practices

Appropriating the local

Past the initial stages of adaptation to the new environment, informants reflected on engaging in purposeful exploration of the commercial and cultural landscapes of their host countries through practices of immersion. Such practices dominated the temporal phase after arrival and settling in and before departure from a locale. Immersion practices encompass activities of exploring the new context, appropriating culture and marketplace offerings, and enacting performances rooted in identity-based motivations of self-affirmation. Orchestrated and steered by the teleoaffective structure of the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview, objects and doings encountered in immersion practices are linked through meaning structures purposing to reinforce the cosmopolitan ideal.

As they enter the second temporal phase of their stay in a place, informants shift gaze away from the convenience shopping in global retailers pertinent to anchoring practices of orientation. Instead, they engage in active search for local brands, retailers or activities that would signal successful immersion in the locale, and attainment of an “insider status”. Such achievement is a contextual goal that reinforces the sense of cosmopolitan worldview both inwards, reaffirming the self-label, and outwards, signaling to others one's successful and meaningful navigation through a diverse global marketplace.

For instance, as soon as Erika felt comfortable in the new surroundings of her second place of residency, she began exploring her new city in search of local, hidden boutiques where she would hunt for bespoke pieces that exemplify her style and taste. When these efforts were productive, the newly acquired pieces would serve as both reinforcers of her global identity, and her belonging to the local. For Erika, such items were usually clothing – unique pieces serving as proof of her skilled immersion in the local culture and mementos granting her an insider status in the eyes of both locals and fellow temporary residents:

I: [...] Have people complimented some of these pieces?

Erika: Oh for the New York pieces that I got, I get asked where they are from all the time. It is always flattering when someone compliments your outfit, but when I was interviewed for this one magazine [online blog] where they take a picture of you and ask you where do you shop, where is this and that form, I remember I realized that the things I was wearing were all purchased abroad outside of Finland. And I remember thinking that it is kind of nice that I have gotten all of these things from abroad so I can really state my global citizenship here. "I am everywhere!". Just today I got this experience that I was kind of bragging about this. So I guess I have this tendency to feel proud of that in my being in the world. That I am not just here.

Practices of immersion offer a two fold signification of sameness and difference within the larger framework of the integrative practice of being a global nomad – they both assist the nomad to state belonging to the locale and to differentiate himself from visitors and tourists, and at the same time to communicate cosmopolitanism, mobility and belonging elsewhere to an audience outside of a locale. Anjali offers a poignant example of performing an immersion practice:

Anjali: Once I have settled I begin my transformation.

I: What do you mean by that?

Anjali: The first thing I do is to get a new haircut. Then I shop - I get a new wardrobe. [...] I want to not be an outsider, I want to be myself but in a way I want to honor my new home. So I would get a haircut and look for clothes that match the trends in the country or the city. I always want to get something from a local shop. I don't go to your usual shops.

Anjali's experiences are similar to Erika's idea of looking for local brands that maybe are "not available for everybody else". Both informants' motivations stem from their dualistic desire for differentiation from and immersion within the locale. While seemingly contradicting, these notions support the cosmopolitan identity conception, albeit in different ways. The practice of entrusting local clothing brands with the objective to communicate a "multicultural bricolage of cosmopolitanism" and uniqueness is reported also elsewhere in the literature as a practice of simultaneous juxtaposition where a global cosmopolitan story is told by nomads' outfits composed of items from different locations (see Figueiredo, 2012, p. 194). This stands somewhat in contrast

with other findings which assert that for mobile cosmopolitans clothing is valued for its functional role in enabling a fluidity of the nomadic lifestyle – clothing items thus do not represent an indexical relationship to a nomads identity (Bardhi et al., p. 521). Through the practice theory perspective taken here however, this study's findings illuminate a parallel notion that has evaded this previous proposition. While clothing, and items of the like, can be indeed valued for their functional value and can be regarded as a tool for facilitating mobility, for many nomadic cosmopolitans they are also symbolically charged – not as relating to identity, but to identification.

I: Does it happen often that people would ask you where is something from?

Erika: No. Unfortunately not. (laughs) Well.. it happened last week with the coat. It wasn't like they asked me where it is from. It was just a compliment for the jacket. And I had a chance to tell where it is from: "By the way you have a nice coat. It has a great idea". "Well, thank you! Its from New York!" (laughs) I just had to use the opportunity for putting it in there. That just shows my enthusiasm towards being a global citizen. [...]

I: Why do you think you rushed to say these words?

Erika: [...] I really want to state the fact that [I am a global citizen]. Like these are the opportunities where I can state that .. you know.. that I am beyond the limitations of this country. But! The way people generally see it is "oh you are bragging that you are traveling". But maybe I am. Maybe that is my way of saying – well...., I have belonged elsewhere.

Through the meaning structures which the cosmopolitan worldview embeds in the nomadic consumption practices, clothing items and brands are used to signal belonging to a social group interconnected through its participation in the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism. Of course, clothing is only but a category among many different objects, possessions and material artifacts that can serve such a function. I will elaborate on this point in the next section, but first, another component of nomads' immersion practices calls for attention – place-specific habits and performances.

Connecting with the place and the community

Immersion practices facilitate a deeper level integration of the nomad in the new social and cultural context. Often processes of immersion begin with stabilizing concep-

tions of home and continue with forging connections between the individual and the community. While for rooted consumers, home and community are fixed in materiality and permanence of networks and activities, for nomads, these processes are embedded in various sub-practices, such as socializing with locals, making a dwelling functional and comfortable, and routinizing location-specific activities, where objects, actions and goals are interconnected and contextualized through the prism of an embodied cosmopolitan worldview.

Nomadic cosmopolitans usually rent furnished apartments or ready to inhabit co-living spaces. Different studies offer varying insight on how nomads construct and care for their places of accommodation. On the one hand, insight points that nomadic consumers do not engage in curation practices, such as caring for, displaying, or transporting things they accumulate (Bardhi et al., 2012). As a result, nomadic homes are believed to appear empty, functional, devoid of objects and also devoid of their homey meanings – lack of objects expresses the lack of investment of individuals' time and energy in their house (Figueiredo, 2012). On the other, however, this study texturizes this understanding with an insight that sheds light on subtle ways through which nomadic cosmopolitans create a sense of home in each location through consumption processes that are part of purposeful immersion practices. The sample in this research reported that while indeed “the symbolic value of possessions often does not translate to other cultural contexts” (Bardhi et al., 2012, p. 520), the nomadic cosmopolitans studied here nonetheless do engage in active, yet covert and subtle efforts in making their temporary homes both functional and warm. Nomads chose to invest in strategic items with which they can construct a home, and which allow them to extract only temporally situated meanings out of these objects. For nomadic cosmopolitans, home is a notion in flux – a new place of residence calls for the construction of a new home. While the findings of this study support extant research that nomads form temporary relationships with possessions and places (Bardhi et al., 2012), they also illuminate nomads' situational efforts to nonetheless create a not only comfortable but emotionally enhanced dwellings, regardless of the fact that they would be abandoned later on without difficulty.

Erika, for instance, moved to furnished studios that she found either through her school and work, or social network. While she didn't invest herself emotionally in the spaces, she did put effort into getting small things to make the residencies more "her": *"good candles, good towels, a coffee cup.. there were other coffee cups already, but I wanted to have something that was mine, more personal"*. Such strategies for constructing home were evident in all other informants' stories as well. The participants recalled back to instances when they have gone beyond the basics, and purchased things to make their immediate environments "warmer". Unlike for traditional consumers, however, for nomads such strategies have a practical, rather than emotional subtext. Mike, for example, repurchased his library on several occasions even though he knew he would have to let go of it when he moves: *"I have repurchased my library once in the US, once in Spain and once here. I didn't purchase a new library in France - I shipped a lot of books there, and I bought a few. Places like Italy and Denmark were so short term - six months here and there that I didn't buy very much stuff. Now, I have a Kindle that I use a lot...So I do order a lot from there. It does the trick to a point."* With the advancement of technology, Mark no longer has to repurchase his library, however for a length of time he willingly took that step so that he can feel at home wherever he was, even though this practice was effortful and expensive. Thus, while the desired result of a nomad's strategies for constructing home is improved emotional comfort, the approach through which such contextual goals are achieved is goal-oriented and directional. For the external observer, the spaces look bare, minimal, or functional, but items with covert symbolic importance for reinforcing one's cosmopolitan self-conception fill the spatial voids in the temporary expatriates' homes.

Another constellation of actions and performances is pertinent to immersion practices – engagement in projects where different activities of involvement with the social context are ritualized and re-enacted in each new location. Arnould and Price (2003) refer to this notion within their conceptualization of "authoritative performances" – activities that involve interplay with others and aim for creating shared connections between the individual and the community. For nomadic cosmopolitans, such performances entail getting immersed in local practices, rituals and traditions, such as eat-

ing local foods, joining clubs, bonding with a work community. For Anjali, for instance, “*doing as the Japanese, or doing as the Finns do*” was a necessary mean for her to feel comfortable in a locale, to blend in like a “*parrot*”. Nomadic cosmopolitans do not isolate themselves while waiting for a next relocation – they immerse themselves in a locale fully and take as much advantage as desired from the unique offerings of the environment. It is indeed their strive for personal cultural and social enrichment that is weaved in strongly in their cosmopolitan worldview and thus make such immersion practices meaningful. It is through such practices that nomads enact their belonging to a community and collect narratives and experiences that strengthen and enrich their cosmopolitan conception upon which future activities, stories and acts of self-presentation are contextualized. Within practices of immersion, authoritative performances emerge as a congruent with the nomadic disposition response to deterritorialization – they re-orient the temporal perspective of participants toward the future, thus crafting a narrative of continuity, and redefine the shared present through reinforcement of one’s cosmopolitan worldview (Arnould & Price, 2003).

(3.) Exiting: Divestment practices

The final temporal phase that marks the duration of a nomad’s residency in a place is the period of preparing for departure and exiting from a certain locale. The time of departure is an inflection point, during which a cluster of divestment practices take place where nomads sieve through their possessions (old and newly accumulated), orient themselves towards the future and recompose in anticipation of the next move. Divestment practices embody processes of recollection of memories and experiences, assessment of material and immaterial value of owned objects, and reasserting one’s membership to the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism through goal-oriented contextualizing of different performances, mental activities and actions.

Many of the possessions that are acquired during mobility can become valuable for the cosmopolitan consumer. Such valued possessions can become to embody who the individual is and how is he situated within a globalized world. The emotional, and expressive qualities of such items make them symbolically important in the context of the nomads' identity projects and performance of the nomadic cosmopolitan practice. While the meanings of such possessions are often fleshed out only within a certain locale and their value does not carry forward, in some instances, location independent consumers are willing to put effort into maintaining the potency of those meanings and chose to preserve these possessions and take them with to the next location. For Erika such items were clothes and vinyl records; for other informants, pieces of art, letters and notebooks carried important symbolic value that rooted the nomad in cherished experiences and appropriated meanings:

Erika: I brought a computer, I brought some books. I still have those high heels and dresses from Canada. (laughs). I still have them here (goes and looks in the closet; note: the interview took place in Erika's home) Here! I got this little black dress. And then those shoes. Oh and that sparkly skirt. This one I got from New York [...]

I: Do you think about where you have bought these clothes from when you are wearing them?

Erika: Yes! I do ! I always remember. [...] The memory is very different if you live in a place [as opposed to when you travel for tourism]. It is also more vague because it is part of everyday life. Or that you buy something special for an event that is happening while you are living there. They are connected to different type of situations.

For Erika, the memory of purchasing the items is vague – lost in the routine of life in a certain place – but it is the lifestyle that these items are evidence of that is important to her. On a first glance, this notion reminds of a tourist accumulating souvenirs as a proof of “having been there”. For nomads however, the meaning structures embedded in possessions is more complex – importantly, they are internalized, private, hidden from the naked eye of the observer. More often than not, possessions of symbolic value are not preserved and used for the purpose of using them as a display of difference or a point of bragging to be presented to others. At least, this is not the

immediate intent. Instead, they serve as internal anchors to an ideology, a worldview that gives purpose to actions, places and things.

Consequently, Erika's attachment to such seemingly functional and symbolically void possessions is rooted not in their utilitarian value (even though such may have been valued in the past), but in their expressive properties, and self-relevant meanings that connect her to her global worldview and cosmopolitan identity. Through preserving such possessions individuals maintain the cosmopolitan self-narratives which organize their life experiences. Conversely, possessions and actions are preserved when they have the capacity to continue and enrich the narrative through changing contexts and circumstances. A hint for how and why items become to embody the meaning bestowed upon them within the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism can be found in the concept for "authenticating acts," which emerge from the integration of life experiences within a narrative of self-development (Arnould & Price, 2003). Divestment practices contribute towards the maintenance of the cosmopolitan self-narrative as they uncover the authenticating properties of certain possessions or activities – properties which affirm uniqueness, hold power and result in transcendence of the role of the nomad within the cosmopolitan practice (Arnould & Price, 2003).

Within various sub-practices nested in divestment practices (such as sorting and evaluating possessions, routines of packing, disposal, gifting away, and storing that unfold before departure) different authenticating acts take place. During those acts, consumers can appropriate authenticating meanings by transforming commodities and experiences into individuated icons of their cosmopolitanism (Arnould & Price, 2003). For instance, possessions which may have been purchased without special meaning may become representative of particular successful anchoring or immersion practices and thus they become intertwined with the self-narrative of their owner. Such authenticating outcomes are personal and unrehearsed – whether the individual endows an artifact with authenticity (Arnould & Price, 2003) is not planned for, and can occur in various dispersed practices throughout the nomad's residence in a place. It is through evaluative processes that take place in divestment practices when material artifacts

are appraised based on whether they have the capacity to carry the individuated authenticating signals in a new network of material objects and doings in the next residence.

Authenticating acts allow the nomadic cosmopolitan to effortlessly move from one locale to another without dwelling in nostalgia. They instill not only mundane objects with meaning, but also individuated experiences of being in a place, whether such experiences are related to local brand usage, location-specific habits or performances. Through the teloaffectivity of the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview, the letting go of those experiences is routinized:

Erika: I don't get attached [...] I think [things] are important when you are in a place and you form relationship with them there - you prioritize things, you learn the habits of being in a place, but then when you are in different place, you have different ways of being and I find that a healthy way of thinking about it. Otherwise I would just be missing things and not feeling content and I think that food is a very good example because different places in the world have different things available and things are priced differently. [...] You are in a different place - you have different needs. And there is certain culture that you are adjusting yourself within. And I am happy to immerse myself to whatever environment I am in and not force old habits in there. I don't travel with this kind of "baggage". And even if I am enriched by all these experiences and I move on to a different location, I might miss these habits and relationships but I miss them when they were happening in that location. I don't wish to replicate them or find substitutes.

This excerpt illustrates a key outcome of divestment practices – through contextualization of possessions' meanings within the cosmopolitan worldview, cherished objects preserve their significance past their utility lifespan even after they have been discarded. In fact, they are let go of not because they are no longer important, or even inconvenient to take with, but because they have already served their symbolic role – a role that is meaningful only in the context of a certain place. Thus, in the final phase of residency in a locale, divestment practices regulate the links between owned objects and embedded meanings. Through their inclusion in the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism, divestment practices provide "considerations" for the nomad to observe in choosing how fluidity can be facilitated from one place to another,

through letting go of or through preserving possessions, classifying experiences and performing certain actions.

Emergent in these processes is the notion that not all possessions are such that one can part with – the nomadic cosmopolitans in this study consistently reported attachments to a very small but stable selection of cherished possessions: photos, books, journals, diaries, and clothes that one relates to memorable experiences and places. Preserving and carrying for these cherished possessions is not effortless – it requires planning, coordination and sacrifice (opting out of preserving other possessions). However, carrying for these possessions ensures self-continuity and self-preservation as they facilitate transfer of meaning and experiences from one location to another. Disruption of these processes occurs in the absence of possibility to preserve such possessions. In those situations, nomads employ preservation practices where valued possessions are very often stored in a parent's home – a place that emerged as a reliable, safe harbor where one could preserve the few items of value that are worth keeping, but impossible to carry with.

I: Can you think of some objects or possessions which at the time you had felt that you cannot part with (aside from electronics and other valuables)?

Anjali: My diaries from my school years. I have saved each and everyone of them. I stopped carrying them with me and I stored them at my parents house, so I haven't seen them in a couple of years, but whenever I go home I take a glance. I don't dig deep because it hurts me that that time has passed. But I consider them some of my most valuable possessions.

...

Mike: Pictures of my family and several of my friends. Even stupid pictures of us - being silly, out and drunk - even those I have been carrying with me for a long time. Notebooks..I really have no practical reason.. I never look at them but I don't have the heart to throw them away. They have ideas I have jotted down once upon a time....Once upon a time people used to send each other letters, so I still have and carry those letters...things like that.

Through such valued possessions consumers anchor their cosmopolitan selves, not within locations, but within experiences and memories. Faced with a loss of their

moorings and possessions, people proliferate ways of creating anchors and foster attempts to overcome the sense of loss through creating authentic images anchored outside of the self (Arnould & Price, 2003). For nomadic cosmopolitans, such external referents are the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview and identity. Consistent with extant literature (Bardhi et al. 2012), almost all other objects and possessions that facilitate daily life are discarded, sold or recycled with ease as one moves from a place to another, thus ensuring fluidity of movement. Altogether, evaluative processes through which nomads inventorize their belongings are orchestrated such that they conform to the meaning structures embedded in the cosmopolitan worldview. In the last temporal phase that concludes the nomad's stay in a certain place, objects, doings and meanings that intertwine in the spatio-temporal network of a locale are contextualized and evaluated. The nomadic cosmopolitan worldview which represents the end goals and aspirations pertinent to a practitioner's successful performance of the integrative practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism regulates how and whether material artifacts, meanings and understandings are incorporated within the broader cosmopolitan narrative.

As reflected upon in this chapter, the consumption experiences of global nomads unfold within a continuous sequence of social, cultural and commercial shifting landscapes. Consumption takes place in the course of performing different practices which orchestrate the objects, doings and meanings within a certain spatio-temporal context. I showed that nomadic cosmopolitanism is a complex integrative practice, enacted through the performance of dispersed anchoring, immersion and divestment practices. Through those practices, nomads attain control of the uncertainty, negate experiential tensions due to mobility and ensure fluidity of movement through instilling objects and experiences with meanings that facilitate the nomadic lifestyle, whilst creating strong and stable cosmopolitan self-conceptions and continuous narratives. Schaetti & Ramsey (1999) suggest that globally mobile individuals occupy the space 'in-between' the ending of one set of attachments and the beginning of the next. The practice theoretical approach adopted here illustrates how varied practices provide a different contextual framework within which objects and doings integrate with meaning structures imposed by the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview. Thus, as location independent con-

sumers transition from one location to another, they effortlessly navigate in between and betwixt nexuses of materiality, meaning and performances.

6 DISCUSSION

At the backdrop of notable amount of literature concerned with how individuals integrate and consume in different socio-cultural environments, this paper particularly builds up on three pioneering studies by Thompson and Tambyah (1999), Bardhi, Eckhardt and Arnould (2012) and Figueiredo (2012) which were among the first to specifically study the differences in consumption behaviors between sedentary consumers and those who spend significant amounts of time in nomadic transnational mobility. Collectively these studies assert several key notions regarding nomadic consumption – that it is goal-oriented, aimed at minimizing tensions between travel and dwelling through meanings provided by a cosmopolitan ideological system (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999); that cosmopolitans engage in various behaviors to re-assemble consumption practices to find new organizing structures for time, home and identity (Figueiredo, 2012); and that consumption follows a logic of instrumentality, where possessions, chosen for their temporary situational use-value, as well as localized consumption practices are used as strategic resources in managing mobility (Bardhi et al., 2012). The research at hand expands these propositions and offers additional insight. It advances the notion that cosmopolitan nomadism is a practice – consisting of material artifacts, skills and routines, teleoaffective structures, rules, and cultural understandings – which attracts and “recruits” individuals, and which becomes a foundational building block of their social life. I suggest that consumption emerges through migrants’ performance of the practice and aims to facilitate skillful enactment of cosmopolitan nomadism through appropriation of different brands and objects, and engagement in different activities. As different individuals have different levels of commitment to the practice and are uniquely situated within it, for some

consumption contributes to resolving tensions or gaining expertise within the practice, whereas for others it channels conspicuous display or non-conspicuous internalization of one's status as a successful practitioner. In other words, nomadic cosmopolitanism is dynamic and individually differentiated – hence, it is the fact of engagement in the practice, rather than any personal decision about a course of conduct, that explains the nature and process of consumption, as well as the patterns of similarity and difference in possessions and use within and between different people (Warde, 2005). Altogether, with a contribution to the literature on postassimilationist acculturation, as well as research on contextual influences on object and brand meaning, the present study expands on these notions and extends our knowledge about how individuals consume in the condition of transnational mobility in several ways.

6.1 Postassimilationist acculturation research

The contributions of this study are well situated within acculturation literature which at large is focused on the tensions individuals manage when encountering unfamiliar cultural contexts. One of the primary assertions within this stream of literature postulates that possessions and consumptive practices act as “anchors” that assist the stabilization of identity with a view of individuals voluntarily settling into one of four acculturation outcomes – assimilation (complete immersion in host culture identity), integration (melding of culture of origin and host culture identities), segregation (withdrawal from the host culture to defend an ethnic identity linked to the culture of origin) or marginalization (an anomic condition of withdrawal from both cultural orientations) (Berry, 1980; Üstüner & Holt, 2007). A postassimilationist view recognizes that acculturation theories' firm focus on ethnicity and nationality as singular source of identity stability ignores the influences of broader social environments or individuals' own economic, social, and cultural capital (Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard, 2005; Gary & Hall, 2015; Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1994). In agreement with emerging understanding in the literature, this study too illustrates that these limitations are particularly pronounced in the context of multi-directional migration, and that the

traditional acculturation paradigm fails to accommodate phenomena such as serial nomadic migration. I find strong support for earlier findings that in the context of non-linear migration and exposure to diverse cultural contexts, consumption behaviors are not orchestrated by territorialized identities or self-proclaimed identification with an ethnic group (Bardhi et al., 2012; Luedicke, 2011). Expanding this postulation, this research illustrates that rather than negotiating identity conflicts torn between acceptance or rejection of home or host culture as acculturation theories would suggest, transitional migrants instead work with the marketplace offerings of the diverse socio-cultural environments that they encounter to build dynamic, multifaceted representations of stable multiculturally situated identity positions. For the cosmopolitan nomads in this study, salient identity projects were defined by the “level of fulfillment of their individual aspirations, hopes and morals” (Luedicke, 2011, p. 232), while the behavioral templates which guided their actions were informed by broadly situated agentic and non-agentic influencers, such as “transnational consumer culture” (Askegaard et al., 2005), social and professional networks, emergent opportunities, as well as brand offerings, and service-scapes. Further, this study suggests that while objects and practices do serve as stabilizing “anchors”, they do so not in a single acculturation outcome, but rather in practice-mediated situational hybrid positions of integration, assimilation and withdrawal from one cultural context to another. In the case of modern nomadic migration, these positions are not set against an origin/host dichotomy, but are rather balanced across a fuse between the intercultural and the monocultural. Each place of residence construes a distinct spatio-temporal entity within which the belonging monocultural context provides a new combination of social discourses and practices that influence how nomads come to see themselves in the context of their immediate and global surroundings, as well as in their role as practitioners of the nomadic cosmopolitan lifestyle.

By approaching issues of nomadic acculturation via theories of practice, this study also revisits the emphasis previous literature has placed on migrant identity construction as a dominant intra-subjective end achieved through means of consumption, where identity projects need to be balanced between minority and dominant cultures.

Previous work has postulated that this model is not applicable for modern nomadic migrants (Bardhi et al., 2012), whose identity projects and identity-work are centered on being/becoming “global cosmopolitans” (Figueiredo, 2012, p. 170). For nomads, expressions of national identities are associated with temporary situated identification, triggered by situational cues, while “global cosmopolitan” identities are associated with deep structure identification (Figueiredo, 2012, p. 170). Expanding on those notions, the findings in this study imply that nomadic consumers stabilize such cosmopolitan cognitive and affective identification within certain nodal points – core determinations around which diverse subject positions are woven (Mouffe, 1992; Schatzki, 1996). The meanings of those subject positions can be fluid and seemingly contradicting – for instance, the migrants in this study felt and thought of themselves as belonging everywhere they go, yet anonymous and distant from their surroundings; they simultaneously avoided and approached the offerings of the marketplace in a sequential pattern allowing them to situate themselves in the market as both knowing locals, and extravagant visitors. The individual idiosyncracies concerning a specific position that the nomads in this study expressed played off the normativized and the regularized (Schatzki, 1996) though potentially plural meanings established in the specific practices of anchoring, immersion or divestment which the cosmopolitans were performing.

Finally, previous research has characterized the world of mobility which the urban nomad traverses as unsettled, fragmented and displaced – a chaotic deterritorializing opposition to the “national order of things” (Malkki 1997, p. 62) where nation, its territory and the imaginative collectiveness are the sources of any individual identity (Nowicka, 2007). As a reflection of that idea, Thompson and Tambyah (1999) described cosmopolitan consumption as a “site of struggle” (p. 215) where “the emotional work involved in establishing new social networks, the stresses of learning how to be a consumer in the new locale, and the small pleasures of established routines as well as familiar surroundings and products” are juxtaposed with masculinized understanding of cosmopolitanism as a “state of intellectual freedom and independence based on nomadic travels” (p. 221). At the turn of the millennium, the authors saw

cosmopolitanism as an identity project, the attainment of which is an effortful aspirational process full of conflicts – hence the emphasis on *trying* in “trying to be cosmopolitan.” Nearly two decades later, in a global context of almost fully digitalized social and professional environment, cosmopolitan nomadism is not only an aspirational ideal, but a socio-practical way of life for many. The respondents’ narratives in this study imply a strong sense of already “being a cosmopolitan” and reveal structured practices through which one performs the role skillfully and effortlessly – taking advantage of both the familiarity pertinent to a global marketplace and the uniqueness of a novel place of residence. Unlike Thompson and Tambyah’s study, this research does not report the same dichotomous problematization of narratives of dwelling and travel. The urban nomads studied here did not express longing for “social connections and feelings of home” (p. 224) which presumably conflicts with their quest for nomadic mobility and independence. Modern day nomads’ aspiration for building emotional ties to places, people, things and to fostering a sense of communal affiliation, is swiftly facilitated through practices of immersion, whereas subsequent practices of divestment bestow liberatory power upon one’s disposition towards mobility and its consequences, thus facilitating skillful performance of the practice of cosmopolitan nomadism. The nomadic cosmopolitan lifestyle can be seen as a stable psychological territory from which the person acts and returns to – the dynamics of deterritorialization produce processes of reterritorialization (Kale, 2005), and for nomadic cosmopolitans those processes unfold within a cognitive disposition that allows them to resolve the variability of encountered socio-cultural environments into a presumably stable everyday life. This research illustrates that nomadic cosmopolitans almost effortlessly juggle structured, well organized, consumption practices from one distinct culture to another, drawing on the varied resources that the different sociocultural environments offer them, reworking meanings of active and conspicuous consumption, and crafting contextually rich, fluid, symbolic meanings of the material which adopts semiotic relevance according to one’s momentary identity position.

6.2 Contextual influences of nomadic consumption

Previous conceptualizations have viewed cosmopolitanism as an ideology which frames one's interpretations of encountered socio-cultural environments and provides a nexus of meanings through which challenges are negotiated, and socio-cultural barriers are faced (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Viewed as an ideological system however, cosmopolitanism thus assumes a coherent set of values and attitudes, a shared point of view and meanings, a set of principles and understandings that a collective of expatriates adheres to. This position leaves unexplained the variability in the consumption behaviors of modern day nomads and their differing disposition towards the material – some seeing it as inessential to their identity-defining projects (Bardhi et al. 2012, p. 518), while others utilizing material artifacts as symbolic resources for building global cosmopolitan identity narratives (Figueiredo, p. 176). Previous research further asserts that nomads detach from objects easily and value them for their functionality and situational value – possessions that lose functional value in a new context are discarded, and often the symbolic value of possessions does not transfer to new contexts either (Bardhi et al., 2012). Unexplained are however the heuristics through which nomads discriminate between objects. How do they attribute meaning to one object with high situational use-value and not to another? When does an object's symbolic value carry to another context, when does it not? This research helps narrow these gaps by turning attention to the contextual influences on the meanings ascribed to consumption objects.

Meaning is not inherent to the object itself. Rather it is a perception of an object consisting of two dimensions – an interpretation of the object's physical attributes (the attribute dimension) and of its action potential for symbolic or instrumental use (the performance dimension) (Kleine & Kernan, 1991). Those dimensions vary among objects and individuals according to the context in which the object is perceived. Context, on the other hand, is differentiated whether it is available to the individual externally (the external context) or internally (the psychological context) – all features of the object's environment constitute its external context, whereas the psychological

context represents the perceiver's store of experiences with the focal object (Kleine & Kernan, 1991). Thus, to better understand nomads' relationship to brands and possessions it is useful to focus not only on the apparent influences of mobility on one's external context, but also on the psychological context within which objects, brands and possessions reside in the course of mobility.

In this research, I suggest that meanings arise within and as a consequence of the performative practice of cosmopolitan nomadism, which shapes and determines the nomads' external and psychological context. As different levels of skill, environment, culture, goals and aspirations with the practice render no two performances alike, meanings across different individuals are distinct as well. For nomads, objects and activities gain their meanings in light of the practice as it is uniquely enacted within a certain locale. Thus, it is the practice, rather than a shared identity project, which guides behavior and justifies the emotions related to material objects. It instills the artifacts of consumption – objects and doings – with relevance and produces meaning for their practitioners. As meanings arise within the context of practices, they can thus be driven by both objects' symbolic and instrumental potential. The findings of this research suggests that above and beyond instrumentality and functionality, to be meaningful the material needs not be possessing identity-linking values, but be authenticating the nomad's belonging to and position within the practice of cosmopolitan nomadism. Thus, even mundane purchases, seemingly unrelated to one's identity projects or self-conceptions, in fact can have a role, albeit a transitional one, in signifying one's ability to be a skillful performer of the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism. This perspective explains why all informants reported seemingly illogical for the nomadic lifestyle curation practices where they purchased items with the purpose of making their dwellings feel more “like them,” even though those items were disposed of with ease before the next relocation took place. In agreement with previous literature, a cheap coffee cup purchased from a flea market that the global nomad buys and then discards before departure, could be perceived as liquid consumption, exemplifying preference for the functional and ensuring ease of detachment from such objects with high situational utilitarian value. However, such possessions are not necessarily void

of symbolic value. The meaning with which the cosmopolitan practice instills this object and the act of its consumption can become embedded in a potent practice-mediated psychological context which authenticates the carriers' ability to appropriate a meaningful identity position within the cosmopolitan practice – a self-enhancing position in and of itself.

Thus, in the case of non-elite cosmopolitan nomads, this study illustrates that while urban nomads indeed are able to detach effortlessly from accumulated possessions within a locale as their external context changes, the objects and activities of their consumption are situated in an intrinsic psychological context – set of the individual's experiences, goals, and emotions relevant for meaning ascription – which could instill them with symbolic and identity-reinforcing value. As the practice of cosmopolitan nomadism is itself symbolically charged for its carriers, embedded with end goals, aspirations and emotions, so are the material artifacts of the nomadic consumption which are resources for performing the practice. Even when discarded during the divestment practices which the nomad enacts before departure, possessions whose use-value does not transfer to a new context are still symbolically important as markers of one's ability to successfully enact the performance of the nomadic practice in that locale. Thus, the situational value of consumption objects can be not only utilitarian but symbolic as well. This symbolic value and meaning of consumption (be it of objects or experiences) for nomads in this study laid in the extent to which these artifacts of consumption reinforced the nomad's skill as a practitioner and belonging to the practice of nomadism. Arnould and Price (2000) suggest that consumers use consumption to create a foundation whereby their authentic selves and connection to community can be reclaimed – they do so through engaging in "authenticating acts" (self-referential behaviors) and "authoritative performances" (cultural displays designed to create a communally shared experiences). I respectfully expand this perspective in this context and suggest that as consumption emerges as an aspect of the nomadic cosmopolitan practice, and occurs as items or experiences are appropriated in the course of a practice, the symbolic meanings that emerge so that activities and objects can be made sense of are of two broad categories - authenticating or authoritative. As such,

cherished were not only objects and experiences which facilitated liquidity, flexibility and ease of movement, but also those who reinforced personal authenticity, belonging to a multicultural cohort and level experience in the cosmopolitan practice. These objects and experiences are not linked to a particular culture, in the traditional sense of identity anchoring, but are cherished for the culture they represent in terms of the nomad's proof for "having been there" not as a tourist but as a cosmopolitan – a primary reinforcer of the nomadic identity position. This notion parallels a well established understanding that nomads use practices as means for engaging with the local community (Bardhi et al., 2012). This study enriches this understanding by illustrating that such activities are not merely acts of reterritorialization, but part of authoritative performances which unfold within dispersed immersion practices. Through these performances, nomads construct and collect narratives that enrich their nomadic cosmopolitan worldview with cultural displays of belonging to a multitude of places. Identity work is thus anchored in one's subjective interpretation of the essence of deterritorialization itself. The notion of "having been there" sometimes can be communicated through stories, narratives, experiences and accumulated know-how, or through objects such as clothes, art, books, and others, whose symbolic value lays in the signaling (whether privately or publicly displayed) function they carry.

6.3 Beyond situational value

With the previous paragraphs I asserted that in the state of mobility object meaning is conditional not only on the external context within which the objects are situated but also the internal psychological context of the individual. This renders possessions' functional and symbolic situational value contingent on one's position within the cosmopolitan practice as a whole, and the physical socio-cultural environment within which the practice takes place in particular. However, as contended before, practices are dynamic and continuously subject to change – from one context to another, from one practitioner to another. Beyond their situational enactment, practices are transformed when new combinations or new existing elements take place or disappear

when links between elements are broken (Schatzki, 1996). In mobility this happens often as the individual transfers from one environment to another and encounters new marketplace offerings, as well as possibilities for new activities pertinent to the locale. Although elements are comparatively stable and are, as such, capable of circulating between places and enduring over time, their functional and symbolic meaning “lasts” in different ways (Shove et al., 2012). The practice of being cosmopolitan is a practice-as-performance that changes every time when the nomad needs to adapt to a new environment. As a result, possessions can be valued and preserved not necessarily because of their instrumental value in a particular locale, but because of their symbolic (e.g. a wardrobe compiled of items purchased around the globe) or functional (e.g. cosmetic products carried with to the next location) utility in facilitating a successful organization of the practice in that locale. This utility is transferable to a new physical context only in so far as other material alternatives available at the new commercial environment of residence are not offering better symbolic or instrumental use.

When it comes to instrumental value, Figueiredo (2012) proposes that there is a dialectical relationship between objects and mobile consumers – whether or not use-value is relied upon or not depends on the mobility cycle stage the consumer is in. This study finds support for this idea by illustrating that changing positions within the practice (i.e. becoming more skilled performer of the practice) is manifested through changes in the consumption behaviors of the nomad (consumption of both objects or experiences) and the meanings that arise in the process of appropriation of the consumption’s artifacts. As novices, nomads rely on social networks and engage in consumption practices that compensate for the lack of items and brands one feels are needed in a new locale. In subsequent relocations, nomads use heuristics and know-how of the global marketplace that they have accumulated during their first relocations and rely on global retailers and brands they had familiarized with already. As a consequence, the inventory of what to “take with” is significantly different the second and third times around than it is during one’s first relocation which indicates that the

perception of the use-value of objects changes and evolves as one matures as a practitioner.

Practices mediate the change in salience of object's symbolic value across environments as well. Individuals become carriers of practices in the sense that they perform practice, but also beyond – one may be a carrier of cosmopolitan nomadism, even when one is sedentary at base, not on the road performing nomadism (Hartmann, 2013). The elements of the practice belong to the practice, and are collectively shared properties rather than properties of the individual. Hence, symbolic value embedded in the material can span above and beyond its situational or use-value while the practice is being performed as long as the material and its symbolic value continue to be essential constituting elements within the practice as it carries over to a new socio-cultural context. For instance, Erika's pair of heels or sparkly skirt that she seldom wears which she purchased during one of her residencies carry little situational use-value, yet they are symbolically charged artifacts that grant her the status of successful carrier of the cosmopolitan nomadic practice. As they transition between contexts, nomadic consumers strive to show that they can be members of more than one culture, hence alternating consumption practices and possessing products from different cultures are ways of demonstrating such memberships (Brimm, 2010). Thus, when objects embody symbolic meanings associated with one's belonging to the nomadic cosmopolitan tribe – whether such signaling properties of the object are public or private – nomads are likely to choose to preserve such possessions. Such symbolic meanings are of course subjective and contingent on the individual's intrinsic psychological context. This view is in line with the postmodern position that consumption is a performative, where objects have the capacity to work as indexes serving as a spatial link and a sign of membership to diverse cultural contexts, narrating stories about multicultural experiences (Figueiredo, 2012; Oswald, 1999).

6.4 Beyond possessions

Finally, extending the conversation beyond nomads' relationship to possessions, this study offers insight on the value of brands for the cosmopolitan nomad. While in the literature possession findings have been successfully extended to brands (Escalas & Bettman, 2005), emergent parallels between the two highlight intriguing differences which subdue the temptation to presume that findings pertinent to nomads' relationship to possessions apply similarly in the domain of brands. Extant research suggests that place attachment and possession attachment share many characteristics such as functions they serve for self-extension, "identity-definition (autonomous selves and affiliated selves) and self-continuity/change (e.g. self adaptation to new places)" (Kleine & Baker, 2004, p. 20). This is a particularly relevant postulation in the context of global mobility and is supported in Bardhi and colleagues' (2012) findings that consumers in mobility are more likely to exhibit less discomfort with both place and possession detachment than traditional consumers are.

In relation to brands, however, the analogy characterizing brand relationships and possession attachments is largely dissimilar – namely, brands differ from tangible possessions with respect of irreplaceability – consumers can transfer brand meaning from one instance of a product to another, whereas object meaning can seldom transfer from one cherished possession to another (Kleine & Baker, 2004). In support, this study finds that the perceived value and meaning of the brands which the nomad encounters are emergent in the context of the practices which the individual carries – anchoring, immersion or divestment practices. Nonetheless, brand's role as a constitutive element of the cosmopolitan's practice remains relatively stable, as meaning transfers easily from one context to another.

This study shows that urban nomads turn to global brands as the object components of unique anchoring practices that take place in the early stages of reterritorialization. They enhance adaptation and continuity as they offer comfort, safety and stability in transient environments. Multinational retailers have an important role in cosmopoli-

tans' consumption experiences, also not only because they provide practical comfort, but because they have a role in reinforcing one's successful performance of the nomadic practice. Their familiarity aids effortless resettlement and supports notions of superior ability to navigate in any context, and to be in control of the commercial environment. Initial consumption episodes which unfold within anchoring practices are thus instilled with meaning above and beyond the use-value purchases they result in. In turn, local, underground brands are sought after for their symbolic meanings and identity-congruent signaling properties. As the incident with Erika's New York coat demonstrated earlier, these meanings are often transferred onto the object itself, which preserves the memory and the experience in time and space. Thus, cosmopolitans use brands to anchor themselves to a place, to help them negotiate their transient lifestyles, and resolve the temporal instability and novelty of their environments. Nomads rework brand meanings from one context to another and detach themselves from market imposed brand associations. Thus, while consumption at global retailers would otherwise be associated with homogenous offerings for the masses and thus be perceived as unsuited for the nomadic identity position rooted in a pursuit for differentiation and rejection of the status quo, nomads efficiently de-problematize the negative connotations of trivialized brand meanings through the teleoaffectivity of the nomadic worldview.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Our present times are defined by potent challenges to traditional notions of territorial nationalism, ethnicity, citizenship and community. Sentiments seem to be on the fence between fierce protectionism of segregative policies backed up by purist nationalistic identity positions on the one hand and pursuit for emancipation from the bounded and static qualities of a world defined by borders on the other hand. Enabled by the far-reaching forces of globalization, the latter position delivers an empowered narra-

tive that contextualizes the emergence of the cosmopolitan modern day nomad – an ethnically and culturally unbound social type who seemingly effortlessly de-problematizes the tension points between travel and dwelling, home and not-home, being from and heading towards.

This study aimed to expand our understanding of how do modern day nomadic cosmopolitans navigate through constellations of different objects, experiences, brands, and activities while going about their transient lives. I contextualized the findings within three sequential temporal phases that segment the length of time one spends in a certain location – phases of arrival, settling in and departure. This perspective illuminated a new angle through which we can begin to better understand the trajectory of possessions, brands, experiences and beliefs in conditions of continuous transnational mobility. It showed that while on a macro level nomadic consumers display flexible attitude towards the material and are able to swiftly adapt to different sociocultural environments, this is not a result of a general, over-sweeping attitude about objects and activities, motivated by need to remain “light” and mobile. Instead, the meanings of objects and activities in the nomad’s life pivot around complex cognitive structures of understanding of the world, and change and evolve continuously, not only in the grander scheme of their lives, but also on a micro level – within the temporal frame of a single residence.

Unlike previous research on mobility and consumer behavior, here the primary unit of analysis was the practices that nomads engage in, not the individuals themselves nor the relations which they form with objects. It emerged from the data that the daily doings and sayings of nomads can be grouped within three categories of practices – anchoring, immersion and divestment practices. By participating in these practices when in a locale, rather than for instance in practices pertinent to rooted consumers or tourists, nomadic cosmopolitans locate themselves within society and in so doing simultaneously reproduce specific schemes and structures of meaning and order (Shove et al., 2012). How objects, doings and sayings, attain meaning and value that facilitate rather than impede mobility is orchestrated by one’s understanding of the

world, the goals and ambitions that motivate and contextualize activities. For nomadic cosmopolitans this is manifested through a unique worldview – way of understanding the material and the sociocultural – which guides behavior within practices, shapes one's evaluative criteria about which elements are to be integrated or excluded from certain practices, and texturizes both the symbolic and functional meaning of objects.

A composite teleoaffective structure within which the nomadic cosmopolitans' purposes, wants and emotions reside, the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview emerged as a foundational conative framework which regulates the nomad's consumption behaviors. As an element in every practice, consumption is manifested through processes of appropriation and appreciation whether for utilitarian or expressive purposes – of goods, services, performances, information or ambiance (Warde, 2005). For the global nomad, these processes are contextualized, regulated and instilled with meaning through the prism of the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview, which drives the individual's understanding, self-conception and actions. This deeply embedded cosmopolitan worldview is the operational structure which continuously connects objects, doings and emerging meanings and embeds them into the template of practicing nomadic cosmopolitanism. As a result, nomadic consumers evaluate objects, possessions, brands and activities according to their capacity to facilitate, enhance and authenticate their worldview. As such, choosing a branded product – for instance a piece of Ikea furniture purchased during the first days of resettlement – is surely motivated by the object's utility value there and then, but is also instilled with meaning reflecting and reinforcing the cosmopolitan self-conception – in this case, ability to furnish and settle in a home quickly and inexpensively without compromising functionality, as well as ability to escape intimidation from having to navigate through unfamiliar retailers in a foreign place. Governed by the teleoaffective structure of the nomadic cosmopolitan worldview, meaning given to objects is complex and subtle – not necessarily reflecting symbolic importance as a form of self-purposive communication or display of identity conceptions, but rather justifying the consumption moment and purchase with regard to how they contribute towards the successful performance of the nomadic practice. As the product lives with the consumer and becomes situated in

different practices that take place during a nomad's period of residency in a certain locale, its initial meaning changes to accommodate the object's role within the broader integrative practice of being a nomadic cosmopolitan. This shift in meaning is what directs the object's disposal or conservation in the face of the next relocation. Thus, the perspective of practice theories utilized here allowed us to better understand – to paraphrase Warde (2005) – “Why do nomadic cosmopolitans do what they do?”, and “How do they do those things in the way that they do?”.

At its start, this study turned its gaze at the diverse conceptualizations of cosmopolitanism and sought to frame a working terminology to allow for unambiguous employment of the terms nomadic and cosmopolitan within this research. Interchangeably, I employed terms such as nomadic cosmopolitans and urban nomads to denote a growing group of consumers interconnected and bound by their coexistence as practitioners of nomadic cosmopolitanism. Schatzki posits that “a social formation consists in a particular intermeshing of specific practices that encompasses specific, sometimes open sets of individuals – it is a particular "bundling" of practices. The sociality that composes it is thus the multidimensional and multilayered lattice of coexistences embraced by that bundling” (1996, p. 200). By being participants in the practices constituting the enactment of nomadic cosmopolitanism, different individuals locate themselves in society and signal their membership to a field of coexistence that shares common interpersonal structuring of understandings and teleoaffective orders, which govern their behaviors. As a group of people performing and enacting the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism, these transitional migrants resemble a tribe that is unsuited for the customaries of tribalism – a community that transcends national and cultural boundaries, sharing new forms of cosmopolitan belonging to the world, beyond ethnicity, citizenship or the confines of a work desk. As consumers, nomadic cosmopolitans appropriate brands, objects and experiences the need and desire for which emerges as a consequence of one's belonging to the practice of nomadic cosmopolitanism. To paraphrase Fournier's thought in this context – consumers don't choose possessions, or artifacts of materiality and experiences, they choose “lives” (Fournier, 1998, p. 367).

8 LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

This study made no attempt to be inclusive of all intricacies to cosmopolitan nomads' consumption behaviors, nor did it aim to craft a rigorous paradigmatic argumentation pertinent to the topic. My aim was to advance understanding through a different analytical angle afforded by looking at consumption as a complex outcome of one's engagement as a practitioner with the cosmopolitan nomadic practice. The perspective of practice theories allowed for placing a balanced, equal focus on both the movement of consumers and the movement of objects and possessions which they encounter or accumulate as they become engaged with the nomadic lifestyle. By doing so, this study helps to shape our initial grasps of how the phenomenon of modern day cosmopolitan mobility affects both individual consumption and the marketplace. This research however is limited by its small sample which delivers only a narrow explanatory path. The study would have further benefited from having the participants' opinions about the initial interpretation and analysis of the transcripts. Such interviewee validation was not implemented, which inevitably leaves out additional, more textured input from the participants themselves that would have surely enriched this study. Having access to the participants' places of dwelling where direct observation of the consumption artifacts in those individuals' lives could have taken place would have also improved the quality of the data. This was possible only with one participant - Erika - whose account emerged as richer and perhaps more detailed than the rest.

Future research can remedy some of this study's inherent limitations and can expand the reach of this inquiry further. Previous research which has examined elite and non-elite cosmopolitan consumers offers somewhat contradicting insight when it comes to object and place attachment (Bardhi et al., 2012; Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Socio-demographically the sample here was placed somewhere in the middle as the participants were neither particularly affluent nor financially constrained. Further inquiry into how income and social class affect the cosmopolitan nomadic outlook would ad-

vance better understanding of the phenomenon at hand. It would be also interesting to explore the role of language in continuous transnational mobility and how it affects practices of anchoring and immersion – how does the linguistic context or linguistic background shape the semantic and symbolic codes of the various dispersed practices taking place during mobility. Consumption in cosmopolitan nomadic mobility also manifests itself as an exciting context within which the reach of extant theoretical constructs relating to brand relationships could be assessed. As cosmopolitan consumers are exposed to a fast changing palette of brandscapes, experiences of brand relationship dissipation and efforts towards preservation and maintenance of “long distance” relationships could be meaning- and emotion-laden processes for global nomads worth of exploration. In addition, Luedicke (2011) proposes a revisited consumer acculturation model, where acculturation is conceptualized as a set of migration- and consumption-related discourses and practices of adaptation that emerge between locals and migrants. Rather than adopting an individualist or in-group-centric perspective, this model focuses on co-constitutive social relations mediated by consumption and communication. Studying cosmopolitan nomadism as situated in a shared, collectively constructed socio-cultural context between locals and nomads would be an important contribution for future research. Finally, an ethnographic immersion into key gathering points for cosmopolitan nomads such as co-living and co-working communities as those revolving around service platforms that facilitate cosmopolitan nomadism – for instance RemoteYear, Roam and Sunandco¹² – would reveal a rich world of insight into this new cohort of consumers.

¹² RemoteYear: <https://remoteyear.com>
Roam: <https://www.roam.co>
Sunandco: <https://sun-and-co.com>

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10 APPENDIX

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introductory Questions

Could you please start with a brief introduction of yourself? Where are you from? What is your nationality?

What is it that you do for a living?

How about hobbies and interests?

Tell me about your family, where are they based at?

Where have you lived in the past?

Tell me about your experiences of living abroad. What was it like?

Retrospective Anchoring Questions

Think back to the beginnings of that particular journey. What do you remember about that time?

Think back of the day of your arrival. Tell me how was that, what happened?

Can you describe a typical day in country A?

What were some of the first things that you bought when you arrived at ..? Later on, how did you go about shopping – if you needed something basic such as... / if you needed something special, such as ...?

Follow-up Questions

What were the reasons that led you to embark on these journeys?

How was the experience of living in country A different from that of living in country B? What was it like to change the environment from country A to country B?

Tell me about the experience of preparing to move out of your home at the time. How did you go about packing your luggage and selecting what to take with?

What type of possessions did you take with? Which possessions did you get rid of, and how?

Do you have favorite possessions/objects? How did they become to be so? Are the things that you always carry with, no matter where you go?

Tell me about the places you lived at (houses, flats)? Were there furnished or unfinished? What was it like to settle in these places?

When you lived in country A, where did you do your usual shopping? In country B?

Can you think of some of your preferred brands /shops/ stores when you lived in...?

What was the experience of having these choices in ...?

The next time you had to move, what happened with all of the things you acquired during your stay at...?

Did you have any difficulties when it comes to finding what you needed/wanted during your stay at..? How about things that surprised you pleasantly / you enjoyed...?